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SOME ROADS TO ROME IN AMERICA

BEING

PERSONAL RECORDS OF CONVERSIONS TO THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

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EDITED BY

GEORGINA PELL CURTIS

"Thus saith the Lord: Stand ye on the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, which is the good way; and walk ye in it, and you shall find refreshment for your souls."—*Jer. vi, 16.*

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By Joseph Gummersbach

—BECKTOLD—
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ST. LOUIS, MO.

TO ALL SINCERE AND EARNEST SOULS WITHOUT THE CHURCH WHO HAVE SET THEIR FEET ON THE ROAD THAT LEADS TO THE CITY "SET ON A HILL."

"AN HIGHWAY SHALL BE THERE.....AND IT SHALL BE CALLED THE WAY OF HOLINESS. .....THE WAYFARING MEN, THOUGH FOOLS, SHALL NOT ERR THEREIN.

THE REDEEMED SHALL WALK THERE: AND THE RANSOMED OF THE LORD SHALL RETURN.....THEY SHALL OBTAIN JOY AND GLADNESS, AND SORROW AND SIGHING SHALL FLEE AWAY." *-Isaiah xxxv: 8-9.*

LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION.

CARDINAL'S RESIDENCE,
408 N. CHARLES ST.
BALTIMORE.

November the 16th, 1908.

Dear Miss Curtis:—

I am in receipt of your kind favor of the 13th instant, by which you inform me that you are about to publish a work entitled, "Some Roads to Rome in America."

From the title of your work it is evident that it will not only be interesting but also instructive, and you have my sincerest good wishes for success; the more so because the book has the cordial approval of several members of the Clergy in whose judgment I have the fullest confidence.

Praying God to bless you, I am

Sincerely Yours in Xto.,

J. CARD. GIBBONS,
Archbishop of Baltimore.

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EDITOR'S PREFACE

The English "Roads to Rome" met with so favorable a reception, and excited so much attention in this country, that it was felt an American book on the same lines would find a place of its own.

After months of compilation the present volume is offered to the American public with the conviction that it presents a record of absorbing interest.

Over many different roads, through doubt and struggles and difficulties innumerable, the writers have reached the one world-wide Church, which in these days of diversity and unrest in religion, and unbelief and social anarchy, is coming to be recognized as the Rock, which in the time of the great water flood will remain firm and unshaken.

These records, therefore, present the ultimate and final conclusions of men and women of intelligence and education who, having sounded the height and depth of religious doubt, and even agnostic unbelief, have found their safety in the Catholic Church. How they reached their final conclusions these pages tell — in language clear, logical, insistent; although the unbiased reader will plainly see that over and above the perusal of books, the deductions of religious controversy, and the conversations be-

tween Catholic and Protestant, one thing is needful to place the final seal on the convert's step, and that is *Faith,* which can only be the gift of God. All that goes before is the preparation, the final gift is the consummation. Without the preparation the gift might not so easily have been given and received; and without the final gift, all the reading and controversy in the world is of no avail.

The Editor's appeal for contributions to her book met with so ready a response from all parts of the country that she was finally obliged to reject much valuable material which she would have been glad to use; but which lack of space obliged her to omit. In many instances she found it difficult to choose. For two of these stories, Mr. Charles Warren Stoddard's and the Very Rev. James Kent Stone's, the Editor is indebted to two books, "A Troubled Heart" (from the *Ave Maria* press), and "The Invitation Heeded." Four other stories which had already appeared in pamphlet form were adapted by the Editor, or rewritten by the authors, for "Some Roads to Rome"—the remaining forty-two stories are new.

The Editor desires to express her gratitude to those of her friends and the Reverend Clergy who gave her valuable suggestions and advice, as well as encouragement.

Chief among these good friends are the Rev. Daniel E. Hudson, C.S.C. LL.D., Editor of the "*Ave Maria*"; the Rev. John J. Wynne, S.J., Ed-

itor of "*The Messenger*"; the Very Rev. George M. Searle, Superior General of the Congregation of St. Paul the Apostle, and the Rev. W. P. McIntyre, O.P., Editor of "*The Rosary.*"

That these pages may dispel mistaken ideas of the Church and assist doubting souls to see their way clear before them, is the earnest desire of the Editor, who hopes that they may find — in the words of the great Cardinal Newman — that "either the Catholic religion is verily the coming of the unseen world into this, or there is nothing positive, nothing dogmatic, nothing real in any of our notions as to whence we come and whither we go."

SOME ROADS TO ROME IN AMERICA

AN ARMY OFFICER,

(Late in command in the Philippines.)

Why I should have abandoned the church in which my family, as far back as I have ever traced it, had been satisfied, and have entered a Church in which none had ever lived until the conversion of my sainted mother, is still a matter of grateful wonder to me as it was an unpleasant surprise to my immediate family.

For generations, so far back as I have been able to learn, my ancestors have been members of the Protestant Episcopal Church, and apparently satisfied with the hope held out by its tenets. No fear of the legitimate succession of its bishops and priests had ever disturbed the equanimity of their minds, or induced them to read the history of faith and study the claims of that older Church, which in their estimation had continued the abuses their ancestors had "reformed" in the sixteenth century, without disturbing the Apostolic succession of their episcopate.

My grandfather had entered the ministry, and shortly after his ordination had married and as a missionary had floated down the Ohio river on a raft, very early in the nineteenth century, landing at Cincinnati, and founding the first Episcopal church in that place, afterwards known as St. Paul's.

He died long before the Civil War, but when I as a boy was sent to the Sunday-school of that church, I could read on a marble slab, placed on the wall in his memory, the estimate of regard in which he was held by his parishioners.

I was taught, not only the sufficiency of the sacraments of the church he had served as missionary, but also, a good deal of the family pride, which should hold loyally in the church all descendants of such a missionary. My grandmother survived him many years and with her we frequently visited, when my father, an Army Officer, was absent during the Civil War, or on the frontier. She had Puritanical notions of the holiness of the Sabbath, never served meals cooked on that day, never permitted any recreation or amusement, and made of it in her misguided zeal a day of gloom and dread for her grandchildren.

Even my father would never write a letter, take a drive or walk for pleasure, or begin a journey on such days, though he did permit warmly-cooked meals, and did occasionally visit on week days, the theaters, called by my grandmother "the Devil's

houses." Still he always retained her aversion to games of chance, and he never learned to play cards. He was assiduous in devotion to his church and clannishly loyal to any fellow members. I can remember his frequent assertion that he had sympathized with the "Know-Nothing" movement, as he considered Catholics in a class with foreigners, and that the government might be endangered if any Catholic obtained office or responsibility.

My mother, too, had been raised in a family that had long been satisfied with the Protestant Episcopal church, and my earliest recollection of her is of accompanying her to church and of being taught prayers in which none but God Himself was addressed or referred to. I still have the certificate of my baptism in that church, found with my mother's marriage certificate after her death.

Ours was a very happy family, though always poor. My father had remained in the Army after the Civil War, and he was so frequently moved about on the frontier that our home was changed about once a year, and my poor parents must have struggled to make ends meet and provide an education for their three children.

When I was about twelve years old and therefore before I had reached the age and degree of discernment at which children of Protestant Episcopal families are confirmed and admitted to communion, a cloud came over the family life. My mother attended service at a little Catholic church in a west-

ern city, and seemed impressed. It was, in the estimation of our family traditions, equivalent to the voluntary exposure of oneself to the contamination of leprosy.

There had never been any false sympathy in my family with High Church doctrines or practices. At that time it would have sounded like rank heresy to call one's minister a priest, or to place within the sanctuary anything more than a pulpit, a chair and table. To be sure, we daily said in our creed that we believed in the Communion of Saints, but no one ever thought what it meant.

We heard our minister at morning service recite the Confiteor in a very general way and extend absolution to all who happened to hear him. And we stated our belief in the "forgiveness of sins," but we would have been shocked had anyone suggested that we orally and specifically confess those sins. That was before Episcopalians, in America at least, had priests in vestments, or altars which represented more than tables on which at times a silver tray of bread and a pitcher of wine appeared. The sermon was the most important part of our service. We met to hear an eloquent discourse, not too doctrinal, but comforting in our delusion, or to hear a well-trained choir. If anyone had suggested the idea of worship, or a sacrifice, he would have been thought a "Papist." The nearest approach to High Church practice which I remember, was that my father abstained from meat on Good Friday.

Shortly after my mother's visit to the Catholic church, we moved to Cincinnati, and there she was instructed by the brother of Archbishop Purcell. One of my grandmother's neighbors was Mrs. Sarah Peter, a very pious widow, a convert, who had built adjoining her residence a chapel for the benefit of the people, into which she could look from a balcony or open window of her house during all the services.

She was my mother's first acquaintance in the Catholic Church, and no doubt assisted her with advice and good books. I can remember well being taken to that balcony on Sunday afternoons and looking down upon a devotional congregation in attendance at Benediction, while I enjoyed the fragrance of the incense which ascended from the Altar. I then observed for the first time that the congregation was kneeling most of the time instead of being seated; that the benches on which they knelt seemed more important than the seats of which they formed a part. Prayer almost entirely replaced the sermon as the essence of the service.

After a few months of instruction my mother was received into the Church by the late Archbishop Purcell, and we joined my father at his new station. In her zeal she endeavored to bring my father into her new church, but used no secret influence over her children. However, her example was sufficient to induce us, without appreciation

of the seriousness of the step, to proclaim our desire to become Catholics also.

Within a year my father was moved again, this time to a place where there were no schools and it was decided best for the family to remain in the East. My father's relatives, shocked by my mother's conversion and believing it their duty to save the children from their mother's fate, persuaded him to enter the children in Episcopal boarding schools, where they would be beyond my mother's example or control, and their attachment to her religion might be stifled in time. My sisters were thus forcibly taken from my mother and entered a boarding school in Canada which was conducted by the Episcopal church. But some disturbance having arisen at the corresponding school for boys, before I had been installed there, my mother took me to a city nearby, where I attended the public schools and lived with her at a hotel. I have always felt a sense of gratitude towards the boys of that boarding school for their lawlessness; for it was the indirect cause of my continued association with my mother, and I was thus subjected longer to the sweet influences of her example.

She made no attempt to have me enter the Church, as that was so contrary to my father's wishes. But she was exact in the performance of her religious duties, and she endeavored, as she said, to atone for so many years out of the Church by a generous practice of its devotions. She attended

Mass early each morning and for propriety's sake, took me as her escort. I well remember being dragged very unwillingly by her all over the city one Holy Thursday, while she visited each church in the city on foot.

I was too young to understand the services, but the sermons surprised me, and I began to study my (Protestant) Bible, and to compare the texts which seemed to sustain the Church. I may add that I have never had a Catholic Bible, and have rarely seen one; but I found sufficient in the Bible issued by the American Bible Society, to shake my faith in the church in which I had been brought up, and to convince me of the Apostolic sanction of sacraments and doctrines which I learned were held by the Catholics, but denied or ignored by the sects.

The separation of her girls from her caused my mother much anxiety, as they were too young, she thought, for boarding-school life. It caused her no little pain to be thought a dangerous influence for her children. After a year of such separation she was taken ill with brain fever and never recovered her health, dying at a comparatively youthful age, just as her children had attained an age at which they might cease to be a care and possibly become a comfort to her. She was buried from the very cathedral in which less than five years before she had been received as a convert. Her conversion had caused her much sorrow through the petty persecution and meddling of well-intending relatives.

But only God Himself knows the consolation she was granted through the ministrations of His Church and the grace given her to bear her cross during the later years of her life.

I was then only sixteen. I would have been denied my father's permission to enter the Catholic Church, had I asked it, as he was very bitter in his belief that my mother's conversion had ruined her life and broken up the family's happiness. But while I had learned sufficient to shake my faith in any Protestant sect, my attachment to the Catholic Church was not such as to prompt me to insist upon joining it. I realized that it would cost some effort to comply with its discipline and live up to the Faith conscientiously, and I failed to appreciate what a help its Sacraments would prove in such effort. While I continued to use my Catholic prayer-book and occasionally visited a Catholic church, my faith was being lulled to sleep by the growth of doubts concerning the Divine origin of any religion.

Interest in school and later in business suppressed in me any immediate purpose to determine the validity of the claims of my sect, just as the good seed of the parable was choked by thorns. I attended all churches, especially those where eloquent sermons could be heard; sometimes an Episcopal church with my father or sisters, but more frequently any new sect of which I read in the papers.

I think no church escaped my visit, excepting, perhaps, the Christian Scientists, of whom at that time

little was heard. Doubtless had I postponed my submission to the Catholic Church a few years longer I might have attended a greater variety, as the sects seem to multiply in a prolific manner. However, the multiplicity of faiths and practices almost destroyed my confidence in any. Even within the Episcopal church I found in one or two cities congregations which I believe my late grandfather would hardly have recognized as orthodox fellow communicants.

One Sunday afternoon, I attended with my sisters, a vesper service at one of the High churches of an eastern city. My father would not go, as he was still loyal to the Low church, the old-fashioned strictly Protestant branch of his church. The pastor of this High church was known as Father ——. On his altar was a handsome marble statue of the Blessed Virgin, and after the vespers was recited a litany, including supplications to the Blessed Virgin and some of the saints. The congregation bowed the knee in passing the altar, or entering a pew, and used the Sign of the Cross. Incense was also used in the ceremony. Attendance there was a fashionable fad of such Episcopalians as yearned for the forms at least, of the Catholic Church. Preaching was replaced by prayer, and many a Low-churchman who came to scoff, remained to pray.

The church itself was known as that of St. Mary the Virgin. I had heard that Father —— called

his morning service the mass, and that, upon application, he would listen to individual confessions, but I did not learn that he considered such a practice an indispensable preparation for communion.

During this period I gained much information from reading the Lives of the Saints, and stories of conversions to the Faith. I acquired, however, an idea that it was easier to die for the Faith as did the martyrs, than to live in it with the opposition of one's family as had my mother. This did not make it easy to announce my desires.

I was then twenty-one, and was impressed with the responsibility incurred and the necessity of announcing my choice. But I hesitated to hurt my father's feelings by such action.

About this time I was very desirous of securing an appointment to the Army, and I had forwarded my application, which, for lack of influential friends, I felt little confidence of getting. Fully convinced that no other Church offered claims of Apostolic origin to be compared with those of the Catholic Church, I had determined that some day before my death I should become a Catholic; but I wanted to postpone such a step as long as seemed safe. In my anxiety to secure the appointment referred to, I made a vow that if God should see fit to grant me the boon I asked, and for which I had so little reason to hope, I would apply for admission to the Church before joining my regiment.

Although such appointments were then very rare,

as few vacancies existed and several hundred applications had been filed, I was to my great surprise and pleasure nominated, and after examination, appointed. So I felt obliged to keep my promise and believed that God had decided it was time to take the step I had hoped to postpone indefinitely.

We were spending the summer at a coast resort, and one Sunday I walked to the nearest town and after hearing Mass at a little church, asked the pastor, to whom I was a stranger, to receive me into the Church. Of course he declined, questioning my seriousness and my acquaintance with its faith and discipline. But he invited me to dine with him, and devoted the afternoon to questioning me on the catechism and doctrine of the Church. He was satisfied with my answers, and promised to hear my general confession, and admit me to Baptism and Communion the following Sunday.

I announced my intention to my father, and invited him to be present at my Baptism. He declined, tried to dissuade me from such an act, and pleaded with me to remain loyal to my grandfather's religion. But I had gone too far to halt, and realized that my conviction of the Divine origin of the Church would render any further delay sinful, as well as a violation of my vow. While my good father, ignorant of the truth, might be saved in the church in which he had been born and lived, I should be judged by the light given me and could never be forgiven for declining its guidance.

So, on the following Sunday, I walked to the little church very early, made my first confession, received conditional Baptism, (an acolyte whom I have never since seen, being my sponsor), and received for the first time the Body and Blood of my Lord Jesus Christ, of which Father ——'s instruction had given me such an inspiration.

I had not then a single acquaintance in the Catholic Church, but while such was usually an indispensable requisite for admission to a Protestant congregation, I found no difficulty in worshipping at a Catholic chapel or church, absolutely a stranger to all about me.

I believe such isolation tended to render even more beneficial and salutary the graces bestowed on me by the Sacraments. I could meditate as well in a crowded cathedral as in a vacant chapel. The little red light before the altar drew my thoughts to our Lord alone in the tabernacle, and my loneliness served to render communion of thought and desire with Him more consoling.

For several years my frontier life kept me where a bishop seldom visited, so it was some time before I was confirmed. Although at my Baptism I was thoroughly convinced of the historical claims of the Church, and understood sufficient of her doctrine to warrant my admission, I did not then understand or appreciate all the beautiful devotions permitted and encouraged as a stimulus to zeal. But none of the questions which deter some Protest-

ants from entry into the Church ever embarrassed me. Once convinced that I had found the Church founded by our Lord, I was ready to accept without question anything taught by His representatives having His authority. I believed in the Divine origin of the Church, and as for the rest was ready to cry, "Help Thou my unbelief."

The personal qualities of a priest never appealed to me, except when outside his church or off duty. I could as willingly confess my sins to a stranger as to one whose piety I admired.

During the guerrilla warfare waged by Philippine insurgents, when soldiers were frequently captured or killed when caught outside our lines, I attended Mass in a town not garrisoned by our troops, kneeling among a hostile people among whom were insurgents in disguise, and with a revolver in every belt, making my confession to a native priest who was doubtless a secret agent, or spy of the insurgents. I would not as a soldier, have trusted him behind my back outside the church. Yet in his church, and aside from his political and my official status, he was a priest of God, and I a penitent Catholic. While either might have been called upon to capture or kill the other outside that building, all strife was forgotten in presence of the Prince of Peace. It was a striking example of the universality of the Church. If thinking Protestants could only travel and see the miraculous results of the efforts of the Church to comply with the command

of Christ to "teach all nations"; if they only reflect that no other creed or code has been taught to all nations, any doubt of the Apostolic origin of our holy religion will be dispelled.

Since my Confirmation, years of happy participation in the Sacraments and devotional exercises of the Church, a pious Catholic wife, the training of virtuous children, and God's almost miraculous assistance in many crises, have convinced me that my life would have been idle and useless had I resisted the prompting of my conscience when called to leave the religious affiliation of all my family and friends.

The peace and consolation I have found should have been purchased at the expense of trials and persecution. But I have no such merit. The step that seemed so momentous caused no pain. My father was soon reconciled to my decision and my only sorrow has been that my example has been fruitless, and none of my family has followed me into that haven of rest from doubt and anxiety which God's one true Church has proved to be.

Surely His promise has been kept. His way is easy and His burden light.

CHARLES FISK BEACH, JUN.,

Attorney and Counsellor-at-Law of the United States; Lecturer on Anglo-American Law at the Law School, University of Paris; born in Kentucky, 4 Feb., 1854; son of the Rev. Charles Fisk and Harriette Adelia Lockwood Beach. Educated: Yerkes' Grammar School, Paris, Ky., Centre College; Columbia University; University of Paris. Called to Bar, New York, 1881; practised law in Wall street until 1895; in Paris and London (as an American Counsel) 1896–1902; in St. Paul, Minn., 1902–3; in Paris since 1903; Editor of The Railway and Corporation Law Journal in New York 1888–1892; Lecturer on Civil Law, Equity Jurisprudence, and Federal Court practice in St. Paul College of Law, 1902–3; author of Modern Equity Jurisprudence, Contributory Negligence, etc.

My parents, now both of blessed memory, were very pious people, so that religion had a large place in my bringing-up. My father was a Presbyterian clergyman in Kentucky and I was taught the Westminster Catechism and sent regularly during my boyhood and youth to Sunday-School and to Church. When I went away from home to school it was to a provincial Presbyterian College where religious instruction was prominent in the curriculum. Thus by the time I took my bachelor's degree I was thoroughly indoctrinated in Calvinism of the strictest and extremest sort. I never joined the church and I recollect that early in life I began to feel a vague and growing impatience at the re-

ligiosity of the training to which I was subjected. I do not remember as a youth ever to have felt any spiritual interest in religious matters, but on the contrary what was so carefully taught me created in my mind a more or less decided distaste for the form of Protestant Christianity with which I was thus made familiar.

During my College course and before I came of age I began to take some intellectual interest in the Roman Catholic Church, although all I then knew about it had come to me from Protestant sources — that is to say that most of my information was misinformation. When I came to graduate I prepared, according to the practice then in vogue, a graduating address, choosing for my subject the connection between the Roman and the Papal power, and entitling my speech "Cæsar and St. Peter." I don't remember what gave me the idea, or how I came to choose that subject, but however that may have been, I tried to trace the development of the Papacy from and out of the earlier Roman Civil administration, the Pontifex Maximus upon that theory being historically the forerunner and finally becoming the Pope. In that early effort I paid a boyish tribute to the Church of Rome, to which I had been inspired by that first study of its history, with the result that my professors as well as my parents were so shocked that, before I was allowed to make the speech on that Puritan rostrum, I was required to tone it down and to eliminate some of the rhetoric

and much of the eulogy. As it was finally passed by the Faculty and as I was permitted to speak it the composition was regarded a bit heretical and something to be deplored. It was of no real consequence and is now of no interest to anybody except to me and only as indicating a trend or tendency in my mind at that early age.

Going soon after to New York to study law I think I forgot for the most part the interest which had then begun in my mind over Catholicism, and which up to that time had been merely intellectual. I do not remember that for some years thereafter I thought much on the subject. I was busy making my way in my profession and then thought but little of religious matters. But, as time wore on, I found myself more and more recurring to the subject. What I occasionally read about it and what I heard and saw in the larger life which I lived after I got actively into business in New York tended, as it now seems to me, more and more — but very gradually and almost imperceptibly — to draw me toward the Church. I did not think much or seriously about it for twenty years after leaving College, but what I did think about it led up in a way to the more positive and reasoned convictions of later years. There was always the germ in my mind.

In 1896 I came abroad to live, going first to London, and from that time and place I date my active personal interest in Catholicism. There I

early made the acquaintance of the late Rev. Father Gordon of the Oratory, whose conversation and friendship was most helpful to me. He was a confrère of Newman, had been with him at Oxford and had been in and of the Oxford movement. He was as all the world knows a very remarkable and a very superior man. He was not only a man of God of exceptional spiritual force but he was also a man of exceeding personal charm. It was easy to think as he thought, and what we talked about and what he said to me — not at all by way of proselytism, but in response to my queries and demands — helped me to solve many difficulties both intellectual and spiritual. From about that time I began to realize that I was becoming consciously or unconsciously a Catholic by intellectual conviction. From about that time I may say that I was a Catholic, because I then became conscious of yielding assent to the dogmas which make up Catholic theology. I speak now only of the mental process.

I had become a Catholic, because I had come to believe Catholic doctrine, and that more by conversation and reflection than by anything I had then read. It was only afterwards that I got hold of Newman's "Development of Christian Doctrine," which is the most convincing book I have read on the subject, and of his fine "Apologia pro vita sua," and later yet of Cardinal Gibbons' little primer of Catholicism, "The Faith of our Fathers," which every convert ought to read. I became much in-

terested at that time in talking with intelligent Catholics upon religious subjects — not only with Father Gordon, but also with such a man as the late Rev. Father Whalen, of the Mount at Wadhurst, a rare spirit of whom I saw much during the earlier years of my residence in England and from whom I drew much spiritual succour, as well as with others in London, who still living shall here be nameless. That was a time when I was relatively at leisure, after many years of strenuous business activity, and when my thoughts turned strongly toward speculation on religious subjects along Catholic lines. I thought a great deal about it for some years, and I reasoned it out, as a lawyer might do, little by little and somewhat in this wise:

Protestantism had never appealed to me either intellectually or spiritually, and when I came to consider it as a religious system as critically as I could, that which most impressed me with it in its ensemble was that it is in its essence religious anarchy. I saw that the Protestantism of Luther and Calvin had, with us, quickly become the Protestantism of the English Puritans and the English State Church; that that soon developed into the newer Protestantism of Wesley and the Baptists; and that that of Wesley and the Baptists soon grew into that of Brigham Young and of Alexander Campbell and of scores of other nondescript sects, and in my own time had further degenerated into that of Dowie and of Mrs. Eddy, and of the Higher Life and of

what not, *ad infinitum* and *ad nauseam*. A system of religion in which I myself seem to have as good a right as Luther or Wesley, or any Puritan or Mrs. Eddy, to start a sect and to promote a schism, seemed to me no "system" at all. All this multiplication of sects and schisms impressed me as the logical and inevitable outcome of the cardinal Protestant doctrine of private interpretation. If there is no final and authoritative interpretation of the Holy Scriptures, if each may and must interpret for himself, if one man's gloss is as good as another man's gloss, and if there is no one to decide finally, no source of authority which is infallible and supreme and ultimate and of divine sanction, then it seemed to me that there is absolutely nothing in Christianity. It is something for noisy and designing scamps, male or female, to exploit for their own gain and to the ruin of their dupes. Religious anarchy never seemed to me any better than civil anarchy.

If we should multiply cheap copies of the Statutes and encourage all men to read them and to construe them in the light of their own understanding or misunderstanding, and to act on such construction, staking their lives and property on the correctness of their private notions about law, and tell them not only to reject any and all authoritative interpretation but also to rely solely on their own wisdom as to what the Statutes mean, we should be doing about the civil law just exactly what the Protestants

do about the divine law, and we should have in civil society just exactly what we have in religion — absolute and impossible anarchy. Civil society could not exist on that basis or without courts duly established to construe and to enforce the law or without a Supreme Court to decide absolutely and finally as to the meaning and intent of the law. Neither as it seemed to me could society on its religious side exist in the absence of authority and without a Supreme Court from which there is no appeal and which must be recognized by all. Protestantism thus appeared to me to be a system of confusion that no wise and just God could create or sanction. I could not understand how a God infinitely wise and just could authorize a system upon which was to depend the eternal salvation of the human race which nobody could understand and about which none agree.

There are several hundred local Protestant sects scattered here and there over the earth, all claiming to teach the truth, all of equal rank, all pretending to derive their doctrine from the same book, many of them putting up claims to exclusive prerogative, no two of which teach the same system, many of which teach the most contrary doctrines, some of which promulgate what most men agree is nonsense, and all of which have but a local and generally but an ephemeral existence. The distinctive doctrine of each little sect, that particular *ism* which constitutes its raison d'être, is stoutly denied and

held for heresy by most or all of the rest. Each sect conclusively and to its own satisfaction "proves" its doctrine from the Scriptures. Thus the *pro* and the *con* of every conceivable religious tenet is asserted by one sect or another and claimed to be "proved" by holy writ. There being no one to decide, it results that for these people taken in the mass and as a whole, the Bible means nothing, proves nothing, teaches nothing, and produces nothing but confusion and anarchy. That is precisely the net result of the sum total of Protestant doctrine. Some of these sects keep the same name for a century or two; most of them do not even do that, but all are constantly changing. Within my lifetime most of the leading sects in America have modified one or other of their tenets some of them radically. Some sects in the same time have about died out and many new ones have been born. Upon the Protestant theory this must go on for all the future; and just as the Methodism of to-day is very little kin to the Methodism of John Wesley's time, and as the Presbyterianism of the twentieth century has almost nothing in common with the Presbyterianism of Jonathan Edwards, so the sects of the next century will inevitably develop new phases of belief and teach new doctrines and proclaim new dogmas as essential to salvation. Where is it to end? And considering that one's soul's salvation depends upon it, what shall one do to make a wise choice among the sects?

It seemed to me that most thoughtful men born Protestants who are content to remain in any sect and are satisfied to believe its doctrines can do so only so far as they think only about that sect and confine themselves rigidly to it. If one would remain intellectually satisfied with Presbyterianism, or Methodism, or Episcopacy, or what not, he must shut his eyes to everything else and put the emphasis of his thinking, not on a comparative study of Protestantism as a whole as contradistinguished from Catholicism, but upon an exclusive contemplation of the dogmas of his own sect, whatever it is. If one takes a serious general view of Protestant sects, weighing one over against the other in any really intelligent fashion, applying a rigid scientific analysis to the operation, and going at it in its ensemble, one must conclude that there is an enormous amount of humbug in it, that it is necessarily and in its essence inconsistent and impossible, irrational, grotesque and absurd. Who is wise enough to separate the wheat from the chaff? Why is one sect worthier to be followed than another? No single Protestant tenet of any sect which is not stoutly denied and repudiated by some other Protestant sect. Confusion worse confounded, each remitted to his own wisdom, all reaching different conclusions, and no one to decide. A *reductio ad absurdum* if ever there was one. Verily the only way to have intellectual peace in Protestantism, as it seemed to me, is to stick stoutly and blindly to one sect, not think-

ing or caring or knowing much about the rest. To know them all is to know how absurd the whole scheme is. Any human government that instituted such a system in civil affairs would be repudiated by all reasonable men. I never could see how a religious system of that sort is any better.

The sixteenth century struck me as far too late for the discovery of ultimate religious verity. If the proposition is that until then the Christian system had been wrong, if it then called for repudiation, and if only then real divine light was finally vouchsafed to a few schismatics in Germany and England, I could not resist the conclusion that the whole Christian system is unworthy of serious consideration; because who shall say that some centuries hence, or for the matter of that the day after to-morrow, a new "Reformation" may not break out, and new light — new gospel truth essential to salvation — be discovered, superseding all previous issues — like railroad time-tables, or the catalogues of the department stores or the telephone books.

So it seemed to me more and more as I thought of it.

In contradistinction to all this confusion I saw the certitude of Catholicism; I saw historically a real Church, not a kaleidoscopic jumble of sects organized and reorganized by schismatics from time to time, but the Church of God coming down to us from the Apostles and from Christ himself, continuing in ordinary generation the work begun on

earth by the divine Saviour. I was much impressed, as I considered its history, by the community of Catholicism, its direct derivation from the Head of the Church, its historic oneness from the beginning; and I then was in a frame of mind to accept its claim to divine authority to govern and to interpret. That seemed to me reasonable and rational, and to be what a wise God would naturally have ordained for His church on earth, if He ordained anything. Anything else leaves all men in doubt, and in practice inevitably lets many men go wrong. All of Protestantism cannot possibly be true, much of Protestantism is certainly untrue and no human mind can decide what of Protestantism is true. There is therefore no safety in it. Who shall decide how far one sect is right and the others wrong? All make the same pretence to truth with equal fervor, while gravely putting out claims the most diametrically opposite.

The mind rejecting that system turns necessarily to the only thing that is left, namely to Catholicism. If anything in Christianity is true, Catholicism is that thing. It is rational and reasonable and what serious men would expect of a wise God. It works order in religion, and works along lines that in other spheres commend themselves to sane men. The Catholic system is what we have in the home and in the State; it provides an authority from which there is no appeal. It gives us certitude. It does about divine law precisely what the State

does and must do for civil law, that is it sets our doubts at rest by ultimate and final decision. If there is no power under heaven given among men of divine sanction so to decide, then the Bible means nothing and is no safe guide and Christianity is a dream. Lawyers know that statutes, even the most carefully drawn, must be interpreted by courts of last resort before they can safely advise their clients as to their true and ultimate force and effect. Everybody knows that what a statute really means is what the Supreme Court finally says it means — not what wrangling attorneys argue and claim it means. That is the position and pretension of the Catholic Church as to her authority to interpret the divine statutes. No other religious organization makes or can make any such claim. Historically it is Catholicism or nothing. No truth was ever any truer than that. Unless, then, God has thus provided on earth a sure interpreter of His law and of His will, a final arbiter to speak a language that we can all understand, and to which we all must bow, divine law as attempted to be set forth in the Holy Scriptures is an inscrutable mystery; no man knows what it is, or what to believe and can only stake his soul's salvation upon the best guess he can make. Under the Protestant scheme one man guesses Mormonism, another guesses High Church or Low Church Episcopacy, another guesses Alexander Campbellism, another guesses Mrs. Eddy-ism, and so on all

through the long list of the sects. Some surely guess wrong.

It seemed to me that the authority of the historic Church, her divine sanction as against this chaos of conflicting *isms* is the only ark of safety.

Reasoning of this sort, enforcing itself upon my understanding for a series of years, finally made me a Catholic from conviction. Then the grace of God I trust did the rest. So after a long period of hesitation I abjured the faith in which I was born, and in the ancient Church of the Carmelites in Paris, in the rue de Vaugirard, under the kindly ministration of Abbé Félix Klein, I was baptized and received into the one holy Roman Catholic Church. "Whereas I was blind now I see."

MAJOR HENRY F. BROWNSON, A.M., LL.D.,

DETROIT, MICHIGAN.

(Son of the late Orestes A. Brownson, LL.D.)

In Massachusetts, where I was born in August, 1835, nothing was so much discussed by old and young as the claims of the different sects, and every little boy stood up for his own. My parents were Congregationalists; my father a preacher of the Unitarian branch, my mother an adherent of the so-called Orthodox. Most of my religious instruction at home, I received from my mother. When my father ceased preaching, he took a pew in the hall where the Episcopalians held their meetings, but without joining their communion, or attending their exercises very regularly. I, however, was sent to their Sunday-school every week from nine to half after ten, and their services from half after ten to twelve, or later. In the afternoon I had two hours more of Sunday-school, and in the evening more services.

In conformity with the old rule, "I must not work, I must not play, on God's holy Sabbath-day," when I came home I read the Bible. One day, in the summer of 1844, I was reading the Sixteenth chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel, and

when I came to the 18th verse, I asked my mother, "What church was it that Christ built on the rock, which the gates of hell should not prevail against?" She answered, "That was the Catholic Church." "Then," I said, "that must be the true church?" "It was," she replied, "at first; but it became very corrupt, and in the sixteenth century holy men believed they were commissioned to reform it." "Then," I said, "the gates of hell did prevail against it."

My mind kept on revolving this thought, that the Catholic Church was the church which Christ founded; and by the time that I came to read in St. Matthew's last chapter, "Behold! I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world," I was fully convinced that the Catholic Church was the true church, that Christ was in that Church and in no other.

One morning in August of the same year, 1844, I picked up from my father's table in his study a prospectus of a new college at Worcester, Mass., where none but Catholic students were admitted. After reading it through, I went to breakfast, and there I asked my father to send me to that college. "They will not take you," he said; "they admit only Catholic boys." "But I want to be a Catholic," I replied.

"Very well! you can go," my father said, "if you can get Channing to go with you." Channing was my next older brother, so called after the

famous Unitarian. Channing's consent was obtained; and before the midde of September we were both at the College of the Holy Cross, where we underwent instruction by one of the scholastics (Robert Boone, S.J.), and we were baptized, in company with four brothers from Georgia, named Healy. On this occasion my brother took the name of Ignatius, retaining only his first name, William. This occurred November 18th, 1844, and my father was conditionally baptized by the coadjutor to the Bishop of Boston in the previous October, having been for months under that Bishop's instruction, though of that we were wholly ignorant, as, I think, my mother was also.

At Christmas we made our first Communion, my brother and I were confirmed the June following.

Once satisfied that Christ founded the Catholic Church, and abides with it through all time, and that He sent the Holy Ghost to teach it all truth, I have always believed what that Church teaches, and have never been inclined to prefer my own views to the teachings of the Spirit of Truth.

MRS. ANNE BUCHANAN,

ATKINS, ARKANSAS.

Descendant of Sir Thomas More, Lord Chancellor of England and Martyr under King Henry the Eighth.

It was a remarkable fact that among converts in our family my brother should have been the first to bring back to us the lost faith of the Ropers. Our mother was a direct descendant of the Blessed Thomas More. My brother was at college and about to be ordained for the ministry in the Church of England when to the astonishment of all his friends he declared himself a Catholic. This was a great blow to us, for we were anticipating his ordination. Our relatives were irate —" not a shilling shall he ever have of mine," said the wealthiest of them.

But his brave y withstood the lashing. He obtained a tutorship in Rome and in the course of a year entered college there. Returning to England he went to St. Edmund's and in a short time became a priest, and chaplain to the Earl of Denbigh (himself a saintly convert) and tutor to his son, the present Earl. For nine years his work among non-Catholics was greatly blessed; by his piety and zeal he converted a great many persons.

As a member of the " High " Church of England

I had joined a religious community named the Order of Reparation to the Blessed Sacrament whose rule was taken from that of St. Francis with a little of St. Dominic's. I was living in the world and hence was what they called a tertiary member. This involved the wearing of out-door dress which I sometimes found annoying as I disliked singularity. A long dark grey cloak and a peculiarly plain bonnet gave me at times a self-consciousness and "I-am-holier-than-thou" feeling which took complete possession of me at times while at others I was ashamed of it.

My acquaintances were all Ritualists and on one of my birthdays I was presented with a large picture of Our Lady of Perpetual Succour, beautifully framed in oak. This in place of the very pretty bouquets I was usually favored with was a great disappointment to me for I did not like the picture. I could not understand it; so with its face to the wall I stood it on the floor in my bedroom. My views were not nearly so advanced as those of my friends. I could not even say as many of them did a Hail Mary, because I believed the Established Church of England forbade my doing so.

It was to my Reverend brother that I wrote about the picture, to which he made no reply. This seemed unkind and strange but I said no more about it. One day an empty niche in my room struck me as needing something to fill it and just

to see how it looked I hung Our Lady's picture on a nail that was there ready for it. It looked well, the frame was handsome and I was satisfied that it should be there. On another day I was in trouble and praying earnestly to our Lord at the prieu-dieu that stood in the same niche when, with tearful eyes, I looked up at the Blessed Mother and her divine Son. There was something in the beautiful faces that won me and involuntarily I said, " Pray for me."

And indeed I was always sure that she did pray for me. I received what I had asked for, but I was too timid to pray to her regularly because of hereditary prejudice, and my Church forbade it.

Easter was approaching and my son's vacation was to be made happy by a long-promised visit to Paris. We had arranged to start in a few days when I received a letter from my Reverend brother telling me he was coming to Tunbridge Wells for a rest. This would be delightful, but the trip to Paris — what of that? As the time was so short it was therefore necessary to talk the matter over by going to see him at Newnham. Sunday intervening I went as usual to the " early Celebration " at the mission chapel. The service was about to begin when through some mysterious agency I was compelled to rise from my knees and walk out of church. Wondering what could be the matter with me, I went home and made no further attempt that day to go to church.

On the following morning I started from my home for Newnham Paddox, Lord Denbigh's seat and my brother's home. It was a dull looking morning and as I walked through the park at Newnham I was puzzled at the miserable look of the presbytery, for every blind was drawn down. Passing through the little gate into the pretty garden I stood at the door full of delight at the thought of the surprise I was about to give my beloved brother. I rang the bell and a Sister of Charity answering it I asked to see Father Martin. She looked oddly at me and said:

"Father Martin is dead."

"No!" I exclaimed, and the housekeeper being in the hall stopped her from saying more for she knew me by a photograph he had shown her.

They took me into his little study where doubtless untouched since he had written to me were the pen and material as he had laid them down. And standing on the table was the magnificent crucifix, given to him at his ordination. I fixed my eyes blinded with tears upon this source of consolation, for the blow was heavy. All present tried to comfort me; but I was dumb under the Hand of God.

When the Sisters took me to the upper room and I once again saw my beloved brother, so truly did I realize his priesthood, his beautiful face reflecting a heavenly peace as he lay there in the grandeur of rich sacred vestments, that a reality

such as I had never known completely quieted the feelings of nature. "A real priest," I remarked, "and far, far beyond all earthly suffering." Hard as it was to see him gone there was much consolation in this thought. I then went to the convent chapel which was at that time used as a parish church. As I entered the first thing that attracted my notice was a picture of Our Lady of Perpetual Succour. A lamp was burning before it and on each side was a lighted candle. Here was a precious thought! My mention of my birthday gift had gone deeper than I had imagined — here was evidence of his desire for my conversion.

On the day of the funeral, the Requiem Mass seemed to bring him very near to me. The church to which I belonged would not own all this but I loved the Blessed Sacrament and the light was dawning on my soul. I had never before been present at a Requiem Mass, and now it was sung at the altar where my dear brother had given his life for his flock. "How can this but be truth?" I asked myself.

In spite of my convictions it was some time before I emerged from darkness into light. I had resolved to go to the Brompton Oratory to see a priest when I was told by the superior of the Order of Reparation that I must stop and consider what I was doing for I was in the greatest peril. "Only the other day," said he in the most solemn manner, "in the cathedral of Notre Dame, in Paris,

the Holy Eucharist was offered to a woman — to the Blessed Virgin! You look astonished, but it is a positive fact that the Roman Catholics do this."

"Can it be possible!" I replied, earnestly desiring not to believe it. I left with a heavy heart. I was in London, and my first thought was to go home and remain in the Church of England, but I was too sad and happily I decided to go and see Lady Denbigh who was then in town and ask her to tell me the plain truth. She was at home, and I had not been there long when Lord Denbigh came into the room. Lady Denbigh told him the story and I shall never forget his look. It made me ashamed of having mentioned it. He held up both hands and exclaimed: "How can any sane man believe such a lie! If any priest in our Church ever attempted such an awful thing as to offer the Holy Sacrifice to the Mother of God, he would be excommunicated on the spot." And in his own saintly way he went on to explain how impossible it was for such a blasphemous proceeding to take place at any time.

I was more than satisfied. The one stumbling block was removed. The heavy burden that had bowed me down with sorrow when I entered that house was now forever lifted from me and I was soon after received into the Church — a most happy convert. As Lady Georgiana Fullerton beautifully expressed it my conversion was "my brother's legacy."

GEORGE J. BULL, M.D.,

NEW YORK AND PARIS.

Oculist.

I was born at Hamilton, Canada. My parents were Irish Protestants, active members of the Low Church party in the Church of England.

Naturally I was brought up in the religion of my family. I can still remember myself at my mother's knee hearing stories from the Bible. She brought me up most carefully, and if, as the years passed by, I became less attached than she was to the Church of England, certainly it was not her fault.

As soon as I knew how to read I was given books, several of which had a decidedly anti-Catholic tendency. I can remember in one of them finding Luther represented as a man without reproach, worthy of imitation. My school books had a distinctly Protestant bias.

At Sunday-school I received instruction in the catechism of the Church of England, which, I may say in passing, appeared to me the most uninteresting of books. I gained some knowledge of the Bible, especially of the Old Testament, whether it was my fault or that of my teacher I cannot say, but certainly I had little admiration for the Bible.

I was taught that my religion was founded on the Bible, and it was pointed out to me that in the Bible could be found a formal condemnation of the Church of Rome.

I can still remember how I gazed with curious eyes at a text written in large capitals in the book of Revelation, Mystery BABYLON THE GREAT, etc., and when I asked the meaning of this my teachers told me it meant the Church of Rome, which indeed was no better than she ought to be. It was but natural that I should have felt something like hatred for the Church thus stigmatized by the Bible. I have learned later, after careful study of the question, that the Protestant interpretation of this text is false. The unprejudiced person, who examines the Protestant Bible in good faith, will not find in its pages an argument against the Catholic Church. Prejudiced enemies of the Church have given a false meaning to the words of the prophets and unreasoning men who have not examined the question go on propagating the untruth, not knowing the evil that they do.

It might never have occurred to me to question the truth of the religion I had been taught, but when I was 15 or 16 years of age my faith was somewhat shaken. I had gone to pass the holidays with one of my father's friends, a Protestant, a learned and distinguished man, for whom I had a great respect and a certain admiration. In speaking with me one day he said that no enlightened

man could believe the teaching of the churches — that would do very well, he added, for women and children, but not for men like him. His words made a deep impression on me.

About this time at the High School in Montreal, my schoolfellows lent me one or two immoral books, among others a book which was published as the true story of Maria Monk, a woman who said she escaped from a convent in Montreal, and pretended to expose the immorality of Catholic priests and nuns. This book is untrue from beginning to end. The Catholic Truth Society has published a pamphlet exposing the falsehoods of the book; but, as Cardinal Newman pointed out in his "Lectures on the Present Position of Catholics in England," true testimony cannot remove the evil effects of misrepresentation and falsehood. The effect of such books is pernicious, even from the point of view of morality, but the object desired is reached, — the mind of the reader is poisoned against the Catholic Church. A little later when I became a medical student I looked askance at the Catholic priests I met, and when I passed a Convent I thought only of the iniquity of its inmates. Although I found little charm in my religion I was quite disposed to take sides with the Protestant party.

Several of my acquaintances had formed new anti-Catholic societies; others joined the Orange Lodges. I do not know what prevented me, but happily I joined none of these bodies.

As I went on with my medical studies at McGill College, Montreal, I went to Church with my family on Sundays at the Protestant Cathedral but with no spiritual advantage.

From time to time it happened that I heard free-thinkers and Unitarians enlarge upon their doctrines, and I sometimes questioned myself whether we were in possession of the truth. I became little by little persuaded that if I studied the foundations of the Church of England I should become a free-thinker, and I wished to keep my faith. I remained a member of the Church of England but without conviction.

Leaving Canada I practised medicine in the United States. After several years of active practice I was obliged to go to the Rocky Mountains to regain my health, which had been impaired by over-work. Here I had more time for reflection, and occasionally spoke with others whose faith was quite as uncertain as my own. The Church of England, the only one with whose doctrines I was familiar, satisfied me less and less. I read much, and among the books which fell into my hands whose doctrines were familiar to me were several pamphlets by Felix Adler of New York, founder of the Society for Ethical Culture, and by Salter, one of his disciples, director of the Chicago branch of that society. Salter in one of his lectures speaks of prayer as presumptuous and selfish. It is, said he, presumptuous in a mortal to address

the Infinite; it is selfish to ask for favours which, perhaps, others may never have. I was pleased to find so high-sounding a reason for the abandonment of prayer. My faith, never firmly established, was not long in disappearing altogether.

In 1883 I went to live in New York, to devote myself to the study of diseases of the eye. I stayed in that city for three years, during which I was much interested in the work of the Society for Ethical Culture. I learned that Felix Adler, son of a rabbi, had been sent to Germany to prepare himself to become the rabbi of the most important Jewish temple in New York. In Germany he lost faith in all revealed religion, and on his return to New York founded the society for Ethical Culture. Every Sunday Adler gave a lecture in a public hall in New York on some moral subject. His audience was composed for the most part of Jews who had given up their religion. The society had established many philanthropic works, schools, orphan asylums, etc., from which all mention of the name of God was rigorously excluded. Adler denied any direct revelation of God to man. He would not be held himself by any creed. One day, however, he said:— "If you would know my creed, it is this. I believe in the supreme excellence of righteousness. I believe that in maintaining and fulfilling the law of righteousness man is sanctified in the service of the unknown God."

Adler seldom allowed himself to use the word

God. He preferred to use such terms as the Infinite, the Perfect, to avoid the suggestion of any idea of personality in the Godhead. He did not admit that man could address himself to God in habitual prayer. At most, he said, one might pray in a moment of exaltation caused by some beautiful spectacle in nature, such as one might see from a mountain top. "Our conscience," said he, "tells us we must do what is just. If we have not faith in this moral law, our life on earth is without object, and the sufferings we endure are a cruel mockery. We must feel that there is a harmony between the order of nature and our moral instincts. Such a law is the essential basis of ethical religion."

I followed Adler's lectures with the greatest interest. He turned again and again to the thought that we must listen attentively to the voice of conscience and seek to make it more sensitive, instead of stifling it as is commonly done.

All the churches, said he, make their morality depend on their religious dogmas. The very opposite should be the case. Religion should be the consequence of morality. When a man has spent his time in bettering the condition of the poor, when he has become the support of the widow and the orphan, when he has sought to perfect, from the moral point of view, his relations with his fellows, his good works have lifted him up. Then, like a traveller who has reached a certain height on a mountain side, he may leave at his feet the little

things of life, and looking out on the distant scene may conceive some faint idea of what it is to hold communion with the Infinite. It is in this that religion consists, but it is accessible to but few mortals. What is necessary for all is the interior reform of each individual and in consequence the general amelioration of society. I had no hopes of reaching the heights pointed out by Adler, but his eloquence charmed me; I was also attracted by his plans for the development of character and by the humanitarian side of his work. I joined the society and openly abandoned the Church of England.

Up to this time I had given little attention to moral questions; but now I studied them with interest, this was certainly a step in advance.

I became a friend of Adler's. The conversations I had with him and the studies I made at this time were not without influence on my character, and I still feel grateful to him for the help he gave my troubled conscience.

But to-day, by the light of the true faith, I easily perceive the imperfections in Adler's moral system. However perfect may appear the morality preached by the reformers in natural religion one may always see egoism and pride hidden under a virtuous exterior. The Divine Master alone can teach humility, abnegation of self, true charity and the other Christian virtues; for only He can give man the grace necessary to practise them.

In 1886 I came to Paris for the purposes of my profession. I naturally went to the Sorbonne, to the laboratory of ophthalmology then under the direction of Dr. Javal, who received me kindly and soon offered me a place in his laboratory. Interesting studies, especially those connected with the construction of an optometer, led me to prolong my stay in the capital, and without having sought it I found myself presently the assistant of Dr. Javal in his private practice. Persuaded that I should find in France all facilities to perfect myself in my profession, happy and proud of the sympathy I met with among the French, I resolved to settle in Paris, there being no special reason why I should return to America. I passed the examinations at the school of medicine, obtained the diploma of doctor of medicine, and in 1889 began to practise on my own account.

For several years I was absorbed by study and the work of my profession. I felt, however, a certain void. The inspiration of Adler was wanting. I looked around me to find an interest in something equivalent to Adler's work, and with this object I examined the movement of the Positivists, but as all that they did seemed much less practical than our work in New York, I was little disposed to join them; I went to listen to Renan; he was wholly unsatisfactory. I was always at the same point. Sometimes I tried to spread Adler's ideas amongst the students. I flattered myself I might lead them

to change their lives, but I must confess I had no success. One of them, urged by me to change his disordered life, replied: "I prefer my pleasure to the servitude of your moral code. By what authority would you impose it?" I looked in vain for arguments to convince him. In reconsidering the matter after this long lapse of time I recognize that, in fact, if we do not consider conscience as the voice of God, its authority is null.

From time to time I went on Sunday to the Episcopal church in the Avenue de l'Alma in the hope of finding something to uplift me, but I never gained there any strength, any elevation of spirit. As in the old days I left the church unhappy and discontented. But it never occurred to me to enter a Catholic church in my search for what was wanting: the prejudices of my childhood and youth blinded me.

In the month of October, 1889, an American lady, a Protestant, who had been my patient, spoke to me on the subject of religion; I was led to tell her something of my state of mind. She told me she quite agreed with my ideas, but had had much satisfaction in reciting a prayer which she would recommend to me, for she was sure it would please me. I replied that my prejudices would prevent my following her advice and I explained to her the objections to prayer, which I had learned in the Society for Ethical Culture. She did not insist further, but before leaving Paris in November she

gave me a little note book in which she had written the following prayer:—

"Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Thy servants and kindle in them the fire of Thy Love. Send forth Thy Spirit and they shall be created and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth."

I found this prayer beautiful, and neither selfish nor presumptuous. Perhaps if it had contained the word God, I should have rejected it, but although accepting Adler's ideas on the Infinite I had retained something of my early faith in a sovereign Spirit, to whom I saw no reason to refuse to address myself; and I promised to recite the prayer every day.

I should doubtless soon have forgotten my promise, but the recitation of this prayer acted upon me like a talisman; it always gave me a sensation of a certain elevation of spirit which did me good. I found myself saying the prayer many times a day, and every time its beneficent effect was felt; it drove away my gloom and raised me above the little things of life.

I had been reciting this prayer only a few weeks when I was invited by a medical man to pass the evening at his house with some of his friends. To my great surprise I found myself at a sort of prayer meeting. They began by singing a hymn, then a clergyman invited the company to kneel in prayer. I must confess I was annoyed; although reciting the invocation to the Holy Spirit I still

considered myself an agnostic, and I was displeased that my host should place me in a false position. However, after a moment's hesitation I knelt with the others, but I did not pray. Before I could withdraw the minister began to read a chapter from the Epistles of Saint Paul. In spite of my ill humour the words of Saint Paul appeared to me admirable, from a moral and humanitarian standpoint they were finer than anything ever said by Adler.

Next morning I wished to read the chapter in question in order to see whether it really merited the admiration with which it had inspired me. For this purpose I bought a Bible and looked through its pages to find the chapter, and although I did not find it, I was attracted at every moment by the beauty of other passages in the New Testament. Ever since my schooldays I had entirely abandoned the reading of the Bible; for the first time in my life and much to my surprise I was carried away by the reading of this book, which it seemed to me I had never seen From that day I found myself often with the Bible in my hands. I made a more or less complete study of the New Testament, and discovered several important truths.

I had been familiar from my youth with the doctrine of the Unitarians, for whom Jesus Christ is only a man; later I had been influenced by the writings of the freethinkers, who pretend that the New Testament is but a collection of legends brought together in the interest of priestcraft. But as I ad

vanced in my studies every page of the New Testament tore away the veil from before my eyes; I recognized the history as true. It is told in such a way as to leave no doubt as to the veracity of the story; one knows instinctively that eye-witnesses are speaking. The life of the Apostles transported me with admiration; their zeal, their devotion, the firmness which they manifested in their teachings showed the Holy Spirit acting in them. In comparison with such men, all that I had admired in the pretended reformers seemed unworthy of attention.

It was obvious to me from the Bible that Jesus of Nazareth was God. This fundamental truth fixed itself in my mind with a force that admitted of no resistance; the prejudices due to Unitarians and freethinkers disappeared forever. I observed how from the crowd which followed Him, Jesus had chosen and ordained His twelve Apostles to found a society, a Church. I should perhaps have remarked this important fact much less if I had not formerly been interested in the foundation of Adler's society. I had been a witness of certain divergencies of opinion between the chief and his collaborators, and I had seen the efforts of Adler to make adepts submissive to his doctrine.

I remarked then that the society founded by Jesus Christ was established to last forever. I observed the care given by the Master in the instruction of the first pastors of His church: how He

took them apart to explain His doctrine saying: — "It is given unto you to know the Mysteries of the kingdom of Heaven." (St. Matthew xiii, 11). He exacted from His disciples a most perfect faith, even in circumstances where that faith seemed to be most in opposition to reason. In his sixth chapter, St. John records how after He had accomplished the miracle of the multiplication of the bread, Christ announced a nourishment still more marvellous: — "I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread he shall live forever, and the bread that I will give is my flesh which I will give for the life of the world." At these words they disputed among themselves and left Him; The Gospel says expressly: — "From that time many of his disciples went back and walked no more with Him." (St. John, vi, 66). In order to keep them, human wisdom would have stopped and disguised the truth; but the Divine Master did not seek to keep those who would not believe.

I do not know exactly if at the time when I read this chapter I fully understood its meaning; but to-day, instructed on the doctrine of the Eucharist, I make this observation: the hearers of the words of Jesus Christ made no mistake as to their real sense. By these words, "the bread that I will give is My flesh" (St. John vi, 51), they perfectly understood that the Saviour did not speak figuratively, but literally. It was that which they refused to

believe: "How," said they, "can this man give us His flesh to eat?" (St. John vi, 52). Far from correcting them in this, our Lord employed expressions (St. John vi, 53–58) still more clear and more energetic, that there might remain no doubt as to the true sense of His words.

To be a member of the Church of Christ it was then necessary to believe all that Christ taught. No one had ever told me this; my Protestant instructors, on the contrary, boasted of the breadth of their views on doctrinal questions. Adler also gave full liberty to his followers.

If we admit the divinity of Jesus Christ, I said to myself, we must naturally accept His teachings; one is the logical consequence of the other.

From a practical point of view the insistence of the Divine Master on the unity of His Church seemed to me of absolute necessity. Without that, how could this Church, according to the promise which He made to the Apostles, last until the end of the world?

The prayer of Jesus Christ after the last supper at the most solemn moment of His life throws so clear a light upon this doctrine that I must quote it here in part.

Lifting up His eyes to heaven, Jesus said: — "Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee. . . .

"I have glorified Thee on the earth: I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do. . . .

"I have manifested Thy name unto the men which Thou gavest me out of the world; Thine they were, and Thou gavest them me; and they have kept Thy word. . . .

"I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which Thou hast given me; for they are Thine. . . .

"Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given me, that they may be one as We are. . . .

"As Thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. . . .

"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word.

"That they may all be one; as Thou, Father, art, in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me.

"And the glory which Thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as We are one;

"I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent me. . . ." (St. John xvii.)

This chapter and other similar passages produced a strong impression on my mind. I began to see that the Church founded by Jesus Christ must exist in our own days and bear through all the centuries the mark of a veritable unity; not a factitious or

relative unity but an absolute one, as real as that which exists between God the Father and God the Son.

Never in my youth had this thought been suggested to me. I had learned that Jesus Christ had come to redeem the world by His death; that He had given certain doctrines which each one might interpret as it pleased him; I had some vague idea of an apostolic succession in the Church of England; but never had I been shown Jesus Christ accomplishing the work of which He speaks in the chapter quoted (St. John, xvii, 4) that is to say, founding His Church.

The Church then was a divine institution and must last forever; such was the second capital truth which was borne in upon me. But where, after so many centuries, was this church to be found? One in its belief, so little like that which I knew, the Church of England — which allows its ministers to hold different and contradictory doctrines and whose members make a boast of the elasticity of their belief.

Proceeding with the reading of the New Testament I saw that Jesus after His resurrection completed the instruction of His Apostles, promising them His Spirit to confirm them in their faith. He charged them to teach all nations: —"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things what-

soever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." (St. Matthew xxviii, 19, 20.)

The Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles showed me a Church remaining united, in spite of innumerable difficulties; and again the thought came to my mind: — Where is that Church to-day?

Never did it occur to me to look for it among the Anglicans, the Methodists or the Presbyterians, still less among the Unitarians. Could it be the Catholic Church, I said to myself — the Church of Rome? But on that side, the wall of my former prejudice rose before me, and I went no further.

. . . . . .

It is well to remember that I was occupied by the work of my profession and by social obligations; from time to time only, in rare moments of leisure perhaps, I came back almost unconsciously to religious questions. I do not remember whether I read the Bible regularly, but I continued to recite the prayer, "Come Holy Spirit" because it brought me a certain calm, a certain satisfaction. In this way two years passed.

In the month of December, 1891, I met a Protestant acquaintance passing through Paris. In the course of conversation we spoke of the importance of frequently reading the works of the best writers of our language, so as to avoid the danger of falling into the English of the newspapers or the faulty language of the Anglo-French colony. "For my

part," said my friend, "I never travel without a copy of Newman's Oxford University Sermons. They are the purest modern English I know." (J. H. Newman. "Oxford University Sermons," Rivingtons, London, 1890.)

The next day I received from my friend a copy of this book. In looking over it I found that the author had written these sermons when he was still a clergyman of the Church of England. I remarked, as had my friend, that the purity of the language was exquisite, but I was soon more interested in the subjects treated. Most of these sermons speak of the relation between faith and reason. Newman shows that conscience is the essential principle and sanction of religion in the mind. "Conscience," said he, "implies a relation between the soul and a something exterior, and that, moreover, superior to itself; a relation to an excellence which it does not possess, and to a tribunal over which it has no power. . . . Moreover, since the inward law of Conscience brings with it no proof of its truth, and commands attention to it on its own authority, all obedience to it is of the nature of Faith." (Op. cit. pp. 18, 19. "Sermon on the influence of natural and revealed Religion respectively.")

Newman points out how Natural Religion, such as the Systems of heathen philosophers, failed in practical effect, and how Revealed Religion supplies the deficiency. He explains that a Revelation is

needful for man, and that Faith working by Love enables man to apprehend the truths of Revelation. Faith is regarded in Scripture as the chosen instrument connecting heaven and earth — as a principle of action most powerful in the influence which it exerts upon the heart. "Though faith is the simple lifting of the mind to the Unseen God, without conscious reasoning or formal argument, still the mind may be allowably, nay, religiously engaged, in reflecting upon its own Faith; investigating the grounds and the object of it, bringing it out into words, whether to defend, or recommend, or teach it to others." (Op. cit., p. 253.)

St. Peter tells us in the first of the Epistles: — "Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts; and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear." (I Peter iii, 15.) In this text, Peter 'gives us a precept, which implies, in order to its due fulfilment, a careful exercise of our Reason, an exercise both upon Faith, considered as an act or habit of mind, and upon the Object of it. We are not only to sanctify the Lord God in our hearts, not only to prepare a shrine within us in which our Saviour Christ may dwell and where we may worship Him; but we are so to understand what we do, so to master our thoughts and feelings, so to recognize what we believe and how we believe, so to trace out our ideas and impressions and to contemplate the issue of them, that we may be "ready

always to give an answer to every man, that asketh us, an account of the hope that is in us.'" (Op. cit., p. 253.)

"Though in all cases a reasonable process, Faith is not necessarily founded on investigation, argument or proof; these processes being but the explicit form which the reasoning takes in the case of particular minds." (Op. cit., p. 262, "Sermon on Implicit and Explicit Reason.")

Newman speaks of Faith as one of St. Peter's characteristics. "His Faith was ardent, keen, watchful and prompt. It dispensed with argument, calculation, deliberation and delay, whenever it heard the voice of its Lord and Saviour: and it heard that voice even when its accents were low, or when it was unaided by the testimony of the other senses. . . . When Christ asked the Twelve whether they would leave Him as others did, St. Peter said: — 'Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life; and we believe and are sure that Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God' . . . If ever Faith forgot self, and was occupied with its Great Object, it was the faith of Peter. If in anyone Faith appears in contrast with what we commonly understand by Reason, and with Evidence, it so appears in the instance of Peter." (Op. cit., pp. 251, 252.)

In another sermon Newman points out that our attitude towards the truths of Faith depends upon our moral state. "A good and a bad man will think

very different things probable. In the judgment of a rightly disposed mind, objects are desirable and attainable which irreligious men will consider to be but fancies." (Op. cit., p. 191, "Faith and Reason, contrasted as Habits of Mind.") The author quotes St. Paul as teaching that "a certain moral state, and not evidence, is made the means of gaining the Truth and the beginning of spiritual perfection." (Op. cit., p. 237, "Love, the Safeguard of Faith against Superstition.")

And as I learned from these sermons of Newman that Faith is something different from what I had supposed, the thought came to me that I, too, might some day after all, have the gift of Faith.

Several friends to whom I had spoken of Newman's sermons told me of the beautiful hymn he had written: "Lead Kindly Light."

I procured a copy of the hymn and committed it to memory. It touched my heart and I recited it daily in connection with the prayer to the Holy Spirit. I was not aware of it at the time, but today I see clearly that I was taking without suspecting it the best means of obtaining faith: I was making a direct appeal to the Holy Spirit to obtain the gift. (Newman's Hymn is in fact the cry of a soul in distress. In 1833, when he wrote it, he was still a clergyman of the Church of England, perplexed by doubts and wondering whether his Church was in the right way. In this hymn he implored the Holy Spirit to lead him on. And the light

came to him; he "did not sin against the light," but finally entered the Catholic Church.) This happened early in 1892. It was at this time that I went again to the Episcopal Church in the Avenue de l'Alma and committed to memory the collect of the communion service:—"Almighty God, unto whom all hearts be open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid; Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of Thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love Thee, and worthily magnify Thy Holy Name, through Christ, our Lord. AMEN."

Many years later in 1906, still marvelling at the beauty of this prayer, I made enquiries as to its history, and learned that it is one of the prayers of the celebrant in the Sarum rite, and is also found at the end of a York litany. It is, therefore, a pre-reformation and Catholic prayer.

Up to this time, I had never been attracted towards the Catholic Church: I knew this Church only by the evil which I had heard or read of it. But soon after I began to recite Newman's hymn I became aware that my thoughts were turning in a new direction; something independent of my will seemed to impel me to enquire into the doctrines of the Catholic Church.

This curious feeling returning to me again and again, I spoke of my state of mind to a lady, one of my Catholic friends, who at once sent me a Catholic Catechism. It seemed to me strange enough

that she should give me a catechism — I had not forgotten the uninteresting catechism of my childhood; however, I read the book carefully and to my surprise found myself able to accept most of its teaching. It is true that the doctrine with regard to punishment after death seemed to me objectionable; but I admitted at once that if these doctrines were formulated by the Church founded by Jesus Christ I was obliged to accept them.

It now appeared absolutely necessary to determine whether the Catholic Church is the Church founded by Jesus Christ. To hear something of this Church I went to Mass at the Chapel of the Fathers of the Assumption in the Rue François Ier. It was a low Mass, and I was disappointed in not hearing what the priest said. The better to understand the service I procured a missal, and with it I went three times to a Sunday Mass in the Convent of the Ladies of the Assumption in the Rue de Lubeck. I was deeply impressed by the ceremonies and by the devotion of the congregation.

A little later I went to the Church of the English Passionist Fathers in the Avenue Hoche, and met Father Matthew; whom I asked to give me some books on Catholic doctrine. He gave me the story of the conversion of a bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States. ("The Trials of a Mind," by Dr. Ives, Bishop of North Carolina.) It seemed to me not exactly what I wanted; I was ill-disposed to listen to arguments, what I de-

sired was to learn simply whether the Catholic Church merited admiration, or whether she was the evil thing that I had been told of in my childhood. However, I read the book and at once became interested in the questions of controversy that were treated in it. Father Matthew after this gave me several other books. I read them all with satisfaction: their tone was admirable. I had not in the least abandoned the critical spirit which is natural to me, but I found nothing to criticise in these books. The subjects of controversy were discussed in them with a frankness to which my Protestant reading had not accustomed me. Corresponding Protestant books misrepresent the doctrines that they desire to discredit; the Catholic authors which I have studied discuss these questions with frankness and without quibbling.

I discovered from my reading that the opinions which had spontaneously come to my mind while reading the Bible were precisely the fundamental doctrines of the Catholic Church.

The Bible had shown me Jesus Christ founding a society, a body, of which all the members must be in communion and in perfect unity of faith. This society was to have continued through all ages even to the end of the world. I had seen Jesus Christ choosing one of His Apostles to be the head of His Church, and now I found in the Church, the history of which I was studying, the marks indicated by the Bible. I beheld this Church teaching, al-

ways, in all countries, with the authority which had been conferred upon her by Jesus Christ Himself; the bishops and priests exercising their ministry as the Apostles had done before them, and always above them all the Pope, recognized by them as the head of the Church. The writings of the Fathers of the Church and the decisions of the councils were a proof of this; in spite of heresies and attacks of all sorts the Church had always maintained the supremacy of the Pope, successor of St. Peter: the rock, the safeguard of unity. And then came back to mind the words of Jesus Christ to him of the Apostles, whom He established head of the early Church: "And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (St. Matthew xvi, 18, 19.)

My studies showed me later the Councils and the Pope explaining the sacred text under the direction of the Holy Spirit; (St. John xvi, 12, 13; xiv, 26), developing it sometimes in the form of dogma, without changing any of the fundamental beliefs taught by Christ, and making that Church sufficiently powerful to preserve it from what is called the spirit of the age. It was necessary to express explicitly certain truths deposited in germ by our Lord in the

minds of the Apostles. The first Creed had shown the belief of the Church in these words: —"I believe in the Holy Catholic Church." A little later, in the year 325, the council of Nice considered it necessary to explain the statement more clearly, and they expressed themselves as follows: —"I believe in the Church which is One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic." And in like manner during the course of the centuries the Church has continued to develop its doctrine.

My studies in history persuaded me that the Catholic Church was the one which Jesus Christ had founded, and my observations showed me clearly that my early prejudices were not founded on truth: I was by this time certain that the Catholic Church was calumniated by her enemies, for I discovered a Church holy not only in its doctrine, but in its ministers and in its members.

. . . . . .

It was at this time that I called upon Father Matthew of the English Passionists, and asked him to kindly prepare me to enter the Catholic Church.

In the month of July having fallen ill I was obliged to go to the South of France, but my religious instruction as a catechumen had come to an end, and I did not wish to leave Paris without having made my submission. I told my mother of this great act in the letter which follows. I should add that I was seriously ill at this time; for this explains why I said so little about so important an event.

ARCACHON, August 5th, 1892.

"I am living in a pine forest near the sea coast, having come here to get rid of a cough which a few weeks ago seemed to indicate a return of the lung disease that twelve years ago took me to Colorado. My health is improving and I hope to resume my work in Paris in October.

"Naturally I was unwilling to leave Paris without being received into the Catholic Church: I therefore made my profession of faith on July 25th in the Church of the English Passionists and was baptized conditionally. I am truly happy at the grace that has been given me. Many times lately when I awoke in the night burning with fever I said to myself: —'I am a Catholic!' and instantly my spirits rose and I was comforted."

The following letter shows that I was regaining strength, for I enter upon certain dogmatic questions.

ARCACHON, August 13th, 1892.

"I believe that our Lord came upon earth to found a Church and that to establish it on a solid foundation He gathered around Him chosen men, whom He instructed daily with the greatest care. He placed Peter at the head of this Church, and it is truly marvellous that to-day, after nineteen centuries, this Church exists stronger than ever, more ancient than any other government of Europe, showing clearly that Christ has kept His promise to

be with it always even to the end of the world. Assuredly the Holy Spirit has always guided the Church, and will guide it always. . . .

"It occurs to me that you said in one of your dear letters, quoting a well known text, is there not one mediator only between God and man, the Lord Jesus Christ? Yes, certainly there is but one mediator of REDEMPTION; but there may be many intercessors. You, for instance, make intercession for me when you pray for me. And so St. Paul frequently asked for the prayers of the faithful in his behalf. St. John (Revelation v, 8), speaks of the saints before the throne of God, praying for their earthly brethren. 'The four and twenty ancients fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are prayers of the saints' (see also Zach. i, 12, 13).

"It has ever been the practice of the Church, guided by the Holy Spirit, to ask the saints in heaven to pray for the sinners on earth. There is proof given us every day that such prayers are answered. I delight to ask the Blessed Virgin to pray for me. We never ask the saints to give us anything, but simply to help us with their prayers.

"It is fearful to think how the Church of God has been misrepresented by her enemies. I am amazed when I consider that I have lived more than 40 years in absolute ignorance of the Church; an ignorance due to early prejudice confirmed by the

foolish remarks of persons as ignorant as myself. It never once occurred to me to consider that the claims of the Catholic Church might be valid, until in answer to my prayer to the Holy Spirit I was given the impulse to search for the truth in the right direction. I then asked to see a Catholic catechism and lo! there was nothing in it to which I could object. I have read many Catholic books since then and have not a word of criticism to offer, but the remarkable fact I would bring out strongly is that my conversion occurred before I had read a word in favour of the Catholic Church, and no personal influence whatever was brought to bear on me. I simply asked the Holy Spirit to teach me to love God and my neighbour, and behold the Holy Spirit answered me:—'There is only one way; the Church will show it to you.'

"I do not wish to make myself out a remarkable person. I only know that the Holy Spirit has answered me and will always answer if I pray aright, and I rejoice! . . ."

"Every Protestant has heard from his childhood of the Catholic Church only as a hot-bed of perdition. Interpreting the Bible to suit their fancy, Protestants give it sometimes quite fantastic meanings, sometimes to suit the needs of their cause. It is in this way that they have declared the Church of Rome to be the Babylon anathematised by the Apostle Saint John, and one finds in their Bible a certain text printed in large capitals:—'And

upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, etc., etc.,' (the Revelation of St. John xvii, 5).

"Why this text in large capitals?

"In order to study this question I have examined at the National Library in Paris many Bibles, Protestant as well as Catholic, of various dates and in many languages, and have observed that this text is not printed in capitals in any of the ancient Bibles, or in modern French and German Bibles. It is printed in capitals only in certain English Bibles, namely in the King James Bible (authorized edition published for the British and Foreign Bible Society), and in the Revised Edition (printed for the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge in 1881). And yet certain Anglican theologians do not hesitate to write that Saint John traced this text in big capitals with his own hand to stigmatize the Church of Rome.

"I lately put this question to a Protestant minister: —'I cannot tell you,' replied he, 'but you know, of course, what is meant by these words?' . . . and as I begged him to explain further —'why it is the Church of Rome,' said he, 'and Saint John could not condemn this corrupt Church too strongly.' And thus it is that the false interpretation given to Holy Scripture by misguided men has been handed down from generation to generation and is still accepted in good faith by simple people. And nevertheless whoever wishes to give himself

the trouble of examining the question, will recognise easily that the explanation given by Protestants is in flagrant contradiction with the prophecies of Isaiah and the promise of our Lord.

"All the Fathers of the Church have agreed that pagan Rome is the Babylon spoken of by Saint John. In the second century, for example, Tertullian wrote that the word Babylon designated pagan Rome, persecutor of the Christians. (*Sic et Babylon apud Joannem nostrum, Romanæ urbis figura est, proinde et magnæ, et regno superbæ, et sanctorum debellatricis.* Tertul., "Adversus Marcionem, lib. III, cap. XIII. Paris 1674, pp. 404–405). And up to the eleventh century, no one dreamed of giving any other interpretation to the words of Revelation.

"In the eleventh century the Albigenses, wishing to find a weapon against the Church which had condemned their heresy, were the first to suggest that the Church of Rome might be meant by the Babylon of the Book of the Revelation. Protestants of all sects, notwithstanding that they pretend to accept no tradition, hold fast to this one and continue even in our own time to teach this erroneous interpretation.

"For Catholics, who always bear in mind the promises of Jesus Christ and the example of the Saints who have succeeded one another without interruption in the long course of the centuries — who have the certainty of the constant presence of our Lord upon the altars in the Blessed Sacrament,

it is almost impossible to believe that Protestants can be in good faith when they attribute to the Roman Church the anathema of Saint John against pagan Rome. Catholic authors have nevertheless, taken into serious consideration the attacks of Protestants on this subject, and have completely demolished this heretical tradition. Bossuet, among others, has written at great length on the subject quoting Saint Peter and many Fathers of the Church of the first centuries who naturally designated the city of Rome, or pagan Rome, under the name of Babylon. He reproduces the prophetic words of Saint John concerning the fall of the Roman Empire.

"One of the best refutations of the error of which I speak was written by Newman in his essay on 'The Protestant Idea of Antichrist' ('The Protestant idea of Antichrist" Essays Critical and Historical, vol. 2). He was still a clergyman of the Church of England, but he makes it obvious that the Church of the middle ages so maligned by Protestants, was CLEARLY the kingdom of Christ, foretold by the prophets, in particular by Isaiah. Newman's conclusion is that the words of St. John in the book of Revelation, of St. Paul in the Epistles, and of Daniel in the Prophecies, 'which relate to Antichrist, cannot by any sober mind be applied to the ecclesiastical events or persons of the past ages of Christianity.'"

. . . . . .

It is now fifteen years since I became a Catholic; and every day I appreciate more and more the blessing of the true faith.

When I was a freethinker, I had no conception of truth, nor of the practical utility of certain of the fundamental virtues of Christianity. To illustrate my meaning I may mention that when I was living in the Rocky Mountains, and one of my friends gave me a copy of the "Imitation of Christ," this beautiful book displeased me in many of its pages; what it said of humility had no meaning for me. It was the opposite frame of mind, of pride, which seemed to help me most, and keep me from certain faults.

Why then, after receiving so many signs of His bounty, shall I not thank God for admitting me to His Church. In the words of Saint Augustine I may say: —"I have loved Thee late, oh beauty so ancient, and yet so new! I have loved Thee late!"

How exquisitely beautiful is this divine Church as compared to the human institution I knew in my early years. It is not the external pomp of worship which attracts me, not the beauty of sights or sounds; for a simple prayer in a village church has the same effect as a visit to a cathedral; I feel that God is truly there and never have I gone away without finding the consolation and the blessing I have sought.

Is it not reasonable then, in looking at the past, to attribute all this transformation to the little

prayer to the Holy Spirit which I recited before my conversion without knowing that I was following in this a Catholic practice? The prayer I used is, in fact, a liturgical prayer, part of the office for Whitsunday, and, for ages, it has been recited every day by thousands of the faithful before going to their work. It is to it I am indebted for all the joys I enjoy in the service of God; it is the Holy Spirit, who has led me to the Church of Christ so long unknown to me, and for which, to-day, if it were necessary, I would gladly give up my life.

To all who desire the light, I recommend the prayer: —"Come Holy Spirit," and the hymn: —"Lead, kindly light." The gift of faith is always accorded to him who seeks the truth, and asks for it with humility.

"Ask and it shall be given you," said our Lord: "Seek, and ye shall find."

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MISS EMMA FORBES CARY,

CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

(Sister-in-law of Professor Agassiz.)

In 1854 Boston was still Old Boston, and the few dozen families who knew each other lived around the Common or on the streets that ran down Beacon Hill or meandered in the direction of the harbor.

Every one went to church at King's Chapel or Trinity Church or the Old South. There was no Public Library or Art Museum, literature and art being combined in the Boston Atheneum.

The Catholics had just passed through the "Know-Nothing" persecution, or, more strictly speaking, they were pulling their way through it with much courage and good temper. The "Know-Nothing" party was regarded with contempt by intelligent Protestants, and men of influence came forward boldly in defense of the Catholics.

It was at that period of depression among Catholics that it was my good fortune to be received into the Church.

There were few Catholic churches in Boston, only (as I remember them) the dear old Cathedral on Franklin street, St. Vincent's on Purchase street, and St. Mary's at the North End — the Jesuit

church. So it was not any esthetic fascination that could draw me Romeward.

It must have been about the tenth of October, my twenty-first birthday, that my mother expressed dissatisfaction at my way of doing my hair, and said that H— R— must come and show me how to make the puffs or bands or whatever girls wore at that time. I knew nothing of H— R— and cared little for my coiffure, but I never disputed my mother's decisions. So, one morning there appeared in my room a lovely young woman who looked like a Fra Angelico angel. I can see her now, her rippling hair, her shining eyes and peach bloom complexion. Her mouth was beautiful, whether it expressed joy or grief or enthusiasm, or gave that enchanting laugh which only belongs to those of Celtic blood. I don't remember much about the hair-dressing, but I soon found out that H — R — was a Catholic, and possessed of faith such as I had never seen. We became intimate friends, and she took me with her to visit her sick poor, to whose desolate rooms she brought cheer and sunshine. Surely charity has not often appeared in such fascinating shape as it did when she encouraged the weary to bear their suffering a little longer, or taught the earth-bound soul to long for Heaven. Not long after this she founded a home for consumptives which has developed into a beautiful little hospital with every modern appliance for the cure of those who in 1854 were called incurable.

But not only did H— R— show me how to love and serve the poor, but she advised me to go and see Bishop Fitzpatrick, (Bishop John every one called him) — to consult him about a charitable scheme of mine.

I remember well the November day that I went to see him in the shabby old house opposite the Cathedral. I remember the grand looking man in a faded purple garment who came into the room, where I had waited an unconscionable time. I remember that he spoke as one having authority and not as the Scribes and Pharisees. I soon entered on a course of instruction. The questions of that day were different from those of the Twentieth century. I read Father Hecker's "Questions of the Soul," Lamennais' "Essai sur l'Indifference," and a good many papers of Brownson, and books of piety. On the other side, alack and well-a-day! I read Chillingworth, Bishop Hopkins, and some unsavory details written by some apostate or other. What conduced to my conversion was the fact that Protestants argued their cause by attacking Catholics, while Catholics explained dogmas, refuted slanders, but did not abuse or ridicule their opponents. In eleven months after my first visit to Bishop Fitzpatrick, I was received into the Church, on October 4th, 1855.

And how about persecution? I have never met with anything but affectionate courtesy from non-Catholics, and many of my relatives and friends

came to see me received. Especially kind was the Rev. Frederick Huntington, afterwards Bishop of Central New York, who wrote most kindly to my parents, advising them not to oppose me, wisely adding "lest the zeal of opposition be added to the zeal of conversion."

It may be asked why I was so easily persuaded to become a Catholic. A great prelate once told me that I had always been a Catholic. I received my religious instruction from my mother and my governess, Unitarians of the Channing school, full of spiritual feeling and of high ideals. As I grew older, I had a vague perception that this noble asceticism did not belong to Protestantism. My governess read to me the Imitation of Christ, and a beautiful book of selections from Fénelon made by Mrs. Eliza Lee Follen. There I found these lofty ideas where they seemed by right to belong. As if I had found a precious bit of mosaic and sought for the work of art from which it had been severed, I hid these maxims in my heart and pondered on them. Not that I acted on them, quite the contrary; but they held up before me a standard that some day I meant to reach. And the day came when H— R— showed me where my precious fragment belonged.

There is one result of my conversion in which I take an honest pride. It enabled me to teach the catechism to the Reverend Editor of the "*Ave Maria.*"

THE REV. B. STUART CHAMBERS, D.D.,

CHURCH OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT, NEW YORK.

It is not without hesitation I offer to the American "Roads to Rome" the contribution of my own spiritual itinerary, nor should I presume to do so but for the fear — may be a scruple — that otherwise, in the strange providence of God, some wandering soul might forever remain *en route*.

It is an awful thing, as converts must know, to be tossed about on a religious sea by every wind of doctrine, with pilot, if any, more dependent upon us than we upon him; awful, I say, even for Americans, fond, too fond as we are, of change of movement, and of the kind which leads nowhere in particular. But one tires sooner or later, in so far as one is sane, of travel and adventure, and longs to settle down in a permanent resting place; one yearns for a home of his own, religiously — though he may not know it — no less than domestically.

To help, even in the most inefficient way, some restless young men to desire, if not actually to find, this home, is my apology for writing what otherwise would be far too personal and private, and precious (at least to myself), for print.

At best only hints can be given, not only for lack of space, but because a conversion to the Roman

Catholic Faith, if not a moral miracle, is never without its mystery; theologically we here deal with the grace of God and man's free will — the Spirit bloweth where it listeth — and psychologically we would attempt to describe the action of the Holy Ghost upon the human soul, a thing which defies analysis and transcends verbal expression.

Hence the difficulty of thinking and speaking clearly on such a subject, the impossibility of unintentionally not offending, of not being misunderstood by somebody, the non-Catholic or born Catholic or both. Few of us are able practically to distinguish between systems and persons, and thus we take or give offence, where none is meant, in religious matters.

On the Patronage of St. Joseph 1894, in St. Patrick's cathedral, New York, I was baptized and formally received into the Catholic Church by the Rev. Joseph H. McMahon. Just fourteen years ago therefore.

Had anyone told me four years before that, that some day, however far-distant, I would be a religious man, a Catholic and a priest I should have regarded the prediction as too absurd for attention. I was naturally interested, 'tis true, in philosophy, but of the modern Agnostical kind, interested in the meaning of life, the whence and the whither of my own existence; interested in literature, in art, in music, even in business, because I had to be; but interested in religion, in Christianity — never.

In the various Protestant churches to which I went when I felt like it, I found an edifying diversion and pleasant gathering of friends; good music, a beautifully written if not always beautifully read service in the Episcopal Church, with too often a dry though fortunately short sermon; lots of sentiment and emotion in the Methodist; frequently a dignified and scholarly discourse in the Presbyterian; and in the Unitarian a lecture of the intellectual Philosophical kind, most attractive of all to me (then), as I was reading Herbert Spencer; feeling myself very wise in consequence and deciding that temperamentally I was non-religious.

So far — I was about twenty-three — I had found in the non-Catholic world: ethics, æsthetics, society, emotions, sentiment and Agnostical philosophy. A defined theological system, explaining the creation, fall and redemption of man, together with his sanctification by means of a Church and sacraments, I knew not as I should, until by the merest chance I came in contact with Catholics, (fortunately representative ones), and the Catholic Church. This was in New York City where I had come to live. I had given up Herbert Spencer, by-the-way, not as mentally uninteresting but morally unsatisfying, my heart as well as my head had begun to crave food. A little book by the late Professor Drummond, "The Greatest Thing in the World" fell into my hands at the psychological moment. Hitherto I had not been a gay or dissipated

fellow especially, but an out-and-out worlding, ambitious above all else, within the bounds of honor and honesty, to make money, to be a successful man from the worldly point of view, before men, *in foro externo;* thenceforth, with a happy inspiration like a rebirth of soul, I determined to be a good man, to find my happiness in love, in the charity as described by St. Paul in the xiii chapter of his First Epistle to the Corinthians, and as analyzed by Drummond. A capital idea in itself and pleasing to youth, but not easily realized — except in the ardent imagination of the Sentimentalist, and I was never that, thank God — because it means the daily, nay, the hourly practice of patience, patience which is charity's first ingredient, Charity suffereth long and is patient. One must be patient in order to be kind. I tried and tried, again and again. No moral discipline experienced since, even in the six years of a seminary at Rome, can compare with that I practised upon my own soul at this period of my life. Soon I felt the need of supernatural help; of a force, (as I then expressed it) outside myself, which would sustain and supplement my own efforts at spiritual development. So I was confirmed in the Episcopal Church, by way of experiment. About this time I happened to form a friendship with a young man in many ways congenial, and a Catholic, practically the first I had ever known. We talked Church a good deal, since I had just been confirmed and was rather keen on the subject. I went to

Mass with him once or twice on Sunday — to Solemn High Mass. It was about as interesting as a Chinese puzzle and quite as understandable. I determined, mainly from motives of curiosity, to find out what it was all about. And I did — thank God, I did — I found out what the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass meant, the idea of it all; the Blessed Sacrament with Christ really, objectively present on the Altar. Here was love indeed! Love only the heart of a God could conceive, only the omnipotence of a God effect. Here was God not as an abstract idea but a concrete reality; God Incarnate, Divine and Human, and never more divine than when most human. God living and dying not only at Jerusalem nineteen hundred years ago but here, *hic et nunc,* every day and every hour of every day; here really present on the Altar for me, as though no one existed in the wide world for Him but me. Here was the Friend of Friends I could always and everywhere, *semper ubique,* count upon, and to the end, the only one. Here at last was the vital force to sustain when all else should fail; here the Eternal Spring to make a desert earth blossom like the rose!

The Blessed Sacrament, the idea of it, thus electrified my whole being and took possession of it. How wonderful, how sublime — and how preposterous to my Protestant tendency of thinking it all away by the light (?) of a sophisticated reason. Had I not read Mr. Herbert Spencer? So mo-

mentarily dazed and thrilled as I was, I believed not at all. But in spite of everything, I could not help but want to believe; except of course becoming a "Romanist," which was quite out of the question; that was even more absurd than swallowing Transubstantiation, if one did not imply the other; thus with the average man do racial and social prejudices outweigh theological difficulties. Besides the Anglican Church solved the question beautifully, so I began attending mass as one of English stock should do, in English at a very high Ritualistic church. But almost from the start it seemed too tentative, too amateurish (I mean no offense) to fulfill my spiritual needs; at best it was a refined dress rehearsal of a much more real and bigger thing at St. Patrick's Cathedral.

I had a real hunger and thirst for Christ really Present, Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity, in the Sacrament of His Love. This was an appetite to be fed alone through faith, which faith, to be of the certitude necessary for real religious faith in anything, must be founded upon something deeper and stronger than the mere opinion of a few. I soon saw in the Episcopal Church that belief in the Real Presence was practically nothing more than a favorite opinion, at least, one not officially and publicly expressed by the Bishop; it was but a matter of taste for a relatively small number of Episcopalians who "liked that sort of thing." I demanded a greater certitude than this. The whole question

was too important to doubt about one way or the other. It was either true or it was false. I wished it to be true, such was the attitude of my will; a most important condition, by-the-way, as in the mysteries of faith the assent of the intellect to what is true is predetermined by the consent of the will to what is good. "But is it true?" I asked. Nobody seemed to be sure but Rome. She alone gave a clear, definite and positive answer. And finally I believed Her, for She spoke as no one else ever speaks in religious matters, *as one teaching with authority.*

If Christ be the Redeemer of men, I thought, and if He founded a Church at all (rather than churches, which is absurd) to represent Him, to apply to all men, collectively and individually, the fruits of His Redemption, that Church should surely know her own mind in a matter so spiritually vital as the Real Presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. It did not take me long to find that only Rome knew what she was talking about on this subject, so dear to my heart; nor was she less sure and explicit about anything else I wanted to know concerning God and my own soul.

To go ahead one must first be sure he is right. For me to be anything at all religiously I must have some basis of certitude outside of, and above myself, for my belief. Is it not true that outside the Rock of Peter, in matters of faith and consequently of morals, all else is shifting sand? I speak of

systems not of persons. Take the Roman Catholic Church out of the ecclesiastical world and what have we left? There remains, to confine ourselves to this country, besides much that is nondescript, many eager, earnest men and women trying everything in the religious line but the right thing, people who because of their American nerves and energy, with a passion for modernity, are acting upon the plan that the latest thing is the best, *because the latest;* a false principle it is, and a dangerous thing in theology. Without Rome the very idea of a Visible, Universal and Permanent Church of Christ disappears altogether. What then is fundamentally necessary to the history, ancient and modern, of Christianity, I decided was also vitally necessary for my soul individually, if I was to be a Christian at all.

This conviction, based rather upon reason as derived from practical experience than extensive reading, brought me to the Faith founded on him who himself had said to Christ, "Lord to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." A remark occasioned in its time, significantly, by difficulties concerning the promise of this same Blessed Sacrament. Thus by the moral necessity of the Holy Eucharist was I brought to the Bark of Peter, wherein by the same impelling grace may I remain, till, crossing the bar, I hope to see my Pilot face to face; whatever the encircling gloom, may the Sanctuary Lamp be ever the Kindly Light to lead me on.

MARGARET TERRY CHANLER,

RED HOOK, NEW YORK.

Wife of Winthrop Chanler, Esq., and sister of Mr. F. Marion Crawford.

I was brought up in Rome under a rather feeble ministration of the Anglican Church, which seemed always cold and empty beside the real Churches we constantly visited as children. As I grew older my indifference to Protestantism only increased. I felt there was but one living Church; outside of that was to be found only free thought, philosophical eclecticism, and a vague platonic idealism. For some time I did not wish to bind myself to any form of belief, preferring to drift from one poetical or scientific theory of the Universe to the other. All through these growing years, from fourteen to nineteen, I read everything I could find in the way of philosophy and metaphysics; but, having no guide, my reading was very desultory. I think a prolonged study of Dante's Divine Comedy was probably laying in my mind the foundations of Catholic synthesis, although I did not know it till afterwards. Three years of Dante lessons with a learned Abbate Pagliari were very enlightening. I realized how vastly inclusive Catholic belief could be; how logical,

while it transcended all logic, how it ministered to all humanity with its divinity.

After Dante, Pascal, St. Augustine, and the Imitation, were my teachers. It was always the note of intellectual helplessness, in the face of the eternal problems, that appealed to me in Pascal. "*Il est bon d' être fatigué et lassé par l'inutile recherche du vrai bien, afin de tendre les bras au Libérateur.*"

In St. Augustine the same lofty strain appears, joined to a more passionate intensity and a clearer vision.

So the stream of my convictions came to me as rivulets from many sources. I made the acquaintance of Monsignor Puyol, the Superior of St. Louis des Français, in Rome. He with great kindness and patience gave me the necessary instruction, overcame my last scruples of doubt, and on the feast of St. Joseph, 1883, received me into the Church to which, by taste and inclination, I had belonged since my first childhood.

HARRIET BREWER CHURCHILL.

My early years were spent in that town near Boston where I was born. My father was of Pilgrim descent, his ancestors having come from the old England to the new in the early days of the Colony, some of them in the Mayflower.

My mother on the contrary was of the Bay colony, with an ancestry of soldiers, and her grandfather and uncles took a leading part in our war of Independence and were officers in the army of General Washington.

It will be seen that I came of stock that was not disposed to draw back when conscience was in question. But the peculiar tenets of the Puritans for which my forefathers braved the perils of the wilderness are dead and buried like themselves: while the Papacy which saw them come has seen them go — into oblivion, while the Holy Father from the banks of the Tiber still rules a Church greater in numbers and more perfect in organization than at any time in the history of the world.

I often think I should like to add to Lord Macaulay's famous passage and to say that when the New Zealander himself shall have passed away and his land be but a desert; when the inevitable catastrophe shall have occurred and this old earth

drifts a derelict in space, then and not till then will the Church militant have failed to exist. Then and not till then will the Sacraments cease to be administered and the Pope be no more.

In the days of my childhood New England was divided into two great religious camps — those who believed in the Trinity and those who did not.

My family was of the latter persuasion, Unitarians. That is to say it was in a church of that persuasion that we had our family pew but my father was an Agnostic, and admirer of Voltaire (whose works filled whole shelves in our library), of Buckle, Parker, Darwin, Huxley and the rest. His wife, my stepmother, was what is called an advanced Unitarian or Parkerite.

It may be divined that in such an atmosphere I was not oppressed with religious instruction. I was taught to tell the truth, and not to steal, etc., more as a matter of social polity than because lies and thieving were sins against the law of God. I was, I fear, a naughty little minx and never went to Sunday-School except for a few weeks before Christmas when the annual tree loaded with gifts loomed large in my expectations. I became then to all appearances a good little Unitarian. I remember on one rare occasion my stepmother read aloud to me the famous chapter of St. Paul on charity, and I recall wondering at the time, why she should attach any importance to it unless she believed that the Bible was an inspired work and

the Word of God. Her idea seemed to be that it was "a beautiful chapter." But no more so than something from Marcus Aurelius. I said that "if that was all there was to it there were other things more interesting."

It was a little later than this that I astonished my family one day by remarking that "I could not understand, if a person wished to lead a really good life, why it was not a good idea to go to confession as Catholics did." The idea was evolved out of my own brain and represented my childish idea of the fitness of things.

A year later when I was sent to Europe to finish my education, perhaps in consequence of that remark, I was furnished with a list of schools which I still have in my possession all marked with a large "P" for Protestant as my stepmother was very much afraid to have me come under Catholic influence. I was placed in a Swiss school, where I was very happy. It was of the Unitarian persuasion; but more philosophic and utilitarian than was the same sect in America.

Before returning home I spent several weeks in Rome, and hours and hours were passed in the churches in presence of the Blessed Sacrament. Here began, as Bishop Spalding declared, my conversion. Not that I was aware of it, or cared much for any religion.

After I had been at home about a year circumstances took me to New York where I for the first

time came in contact with the workings of the Catholic Church. I saw the doctrines of the Church applied alike to rich and poor, gentle and simple, learned and unlearned. I witnessed the atmosphere of devotion, the unanimity of worship, the daily succession of Masses, the coming and going of one congregation after another, the devout genuflections, and all this in the most commercial and latter day city in the world.

I was much impressed; and then a Protestant friend lent me a copy of *The Imitation of Christ* of which I had never heard. A book written presumably by one of those idle and dissolute monks we read so much of in Protestant books.

Then I read Newman, and now that I have spoken of the great Cardinal, who is there who does not know that in the matter of a conversion, his is a name to conjure with?

Although I had never been strictly speaking a Protestant, I felt that I could not openly denounce the opinions under the influence of which I had been educated until I had heard what a Unitarian minister should have to say for that particular sect. I called on the Rev. James Freeman Clarke. I remember one day his offering to pray with me. But I never could divest myself of the idea that all he said was merely the sum of his own reflections and opinions and being such was no more worthy of credence than the sum of my own. I felt that he had no more authority for anything he chose

to put forward than that "he, James Freeman Clarke, thought so" and I think I can with truth say that just on this hinge turned the door through which I entered the Church.

I was also much impressed by the fact that the sermons in Unitarian pulpits were so often finished essays on topics of the time rather than on Christ. Almost any agreeable subject was introduced, politics included. I even heard at what they called a "conference," a minister teach the children a verse from Longfellow as a religious lesson. In fact many of the Unitarian sermons would have made excellent editorials in any first class newspaper.

The Unitarians in New England were founded by William Ellery Channing, who having decided that the Scriptures did not teach the doctrine of the Trinity established a sect on that opinion. They prided themselves at that time on their progressiveness and they progressed so well that the first members having denied that the Son was God, their children denied that the Creator is our Father. A most logical conclusion, but quite a pagan one.

The Rev. James Freeman Clarke having failed to convince me in any way I applied to the Reverend Phillips Brooks. The conclusion of his advice was that if there were any church on earth which seemed to me to have been founded by Christ it was my duty to join it.

A little later the Rev. Father Edward Holker Welch, S.J., of Boston College, gave me condi-

tional baptism. The root of my conversion was my belief in the Papacy, the principle of authority; and I think to-day as I thought then that an honest study of its history is enough to convince the world of its claims. Its very existence carried along and protected through the ages is a perpetual miracle.

ALEXIS I DU PONT COLEMAN,

M.A., KEBLE COLLEGE, OXFORD.

Late Rector of St. Michael's Episcopal Church, Wilmington, Delaware, and son of the late Rt. Rev. Leighton Coleman, D.D., Bishop of Delaware. Author and translator of Maeterlinck.

Montaigne, in the tender, fragrant essay he has consecrated to the memory of his bosom friend Etienne de la Boëtie, tells how people asked him why they had loved each other so: "and I could only answer, 'Because it was I — because it was he.'" In like manner, when I am asked to tell something of how I found my way into the Church, I can really say no more than "Because God was good — because I was meant to be a Catholic."

I had read but little of directly controversial writing; I had few Catholic friends; I had seen for years almost nothing of the majesty and beauty of the Church's worship: Yet, though I was so long "disobedient unto the heavenly vision," grace worked on patiently until the end was reached.

It was in my last year at Oxford that the thing came up acutely for the first time. I went up to London, and, knowing no priests, sought at random for a son of St. Dominic, to whom I had long been devoted. In the great Dominican convent at Haver-

stock Hill, all one Sunday afternoon, a kindly friar, himself a convert, laboured to remove my doubts, and I went away almost persuaded. Once back in the stubborn High Church atmosphere of Oxford, I wavered and was less sure; and what decided me to stay where I was may have been the calm assurance of an intimate friend, the most devout and positively saintly of my contemporaries, who is to-day a Benedictine monk and one of the best known of English Catholic writers.

The same curious thing happened twice more. A second time I was on the brink, the next summer, in a studious Long Vacation spent in the peaceful seclusion of Cumbrae in Scotland; and the vice-provost of the Anglican theological college there, who laid my doubts for the time, also preceded me into the Church. The third was after I had been ordained and returned to America. I knew well one of the most learned theologians of the Episcopal Church, and put my doubts before him, to have them overborne by his superior knowledge and acute dialectics; and now but a few weeks since I have had the happiness of welcoming him too into the City of Peace.

So I worked on for six years in a parish which I had evolved out of nothing in a city slum, flattering myself that I was giving my people "the full round of Catholic doctrine and ritual," as one used fondly to say, shutting my eyes to the anomalies and the irreverences and the heresies which I knew

to be all around me in the other parishes of my communion, and sheltering my congregation as far as possible from contact with them.

At last, however, stubborn logic drove me into a corner. I faced fairly the fact that I was teaching, on the sacraments, for example, the straight doctrine of the Council of Trent — and teaching it not because it appealed to me personally but precisely because it *was* the doctrine of the Council of Trent. How, then, I was finally compelled to ask myself, could I go on doing *that,* and yet reject what the same Council taught as clearly on the supremacy of the Holy See?

But wherever I let in logic, the fortifications behind which I had sheltered myself crumbled and fell. I heard my High Church colleagues making loud proclamation that their body was "a branch of the Catholic Church" — when they felt the need of support against Presbyterian or Baptist attacks; but I knew how complacently they spoke of it as "The Church" and of themselves as "Churchmen" when no outsiders were present. I knew how they resented the sending of an Apostolic Delegate to the United States, all the while that they were at least passive accomplices in the attempt to set up a new church in Mexico — Cuba and Porto Rico and the Philippines had not yet come to form part of the General Convention's responsibilities.

In a word, the time came when special pleading could no longer obscure the truth; and twelve years

ago I knelt before the Altar of St. Vincent de Paul's church in New York and made my submission with a humble and satisfied heart. I emphasize the length of time which has passed to lead up to my final word — that never in the twelve years have I had a single hour of questioning or regret for the step which I took that day, or ceased to be grateful to God for bearing so patiently with my delays and hesitations and for bringing me home at the last.

CARYL COLEMAN, ESQ.,

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The world at large has very little curiosity about a man who joins any Church, except the "Church which is called Catholic," not only by its own members, but by its adversaries. Let him unite with that organization, and the world is eager to know the reasons for his doing so. Almost the first question asked a convert is: "What led you to become a Catholic?" It is a question often very difficult to answer, so as to be understood by a non-Catholic mind, one unbelieving in the kingdom of grace — the action of the Holy Ghost upon a human soul. Every convert, the moment he enters *the one fold of Christ,* and begins to live a life of faith, feels and recognizes how little he has had to do with the blessing that has come to him, therefore it is much easier for him to give the reasons why he is a Catholic, than why he became one.

Every honest man, if he is a reasoning one, who turns his face Romeward in a spirit of sincere examination, will sooner or later reach the goal. Inquiry will yield to faith: *Seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you.* The first step toward Catholicity having been taken by the

future convert (which movement may have had its source in his own reason, or in environments, or in answer to the prayers of others, or in obedience to a heavenly inspiration), his will and understanding come under the influence of the Holy Spirit; and he is led, often imperceptibly, little by little, from one truth to another, until at last the light of Christian faith dispels the darkness of unbelief from his soul and he becomes a child of grace. If he attempts to give the reasons that led him into the Church, it usually ends in giving a history of the growth of grace within his soul, a very difficult form of narrative. I foresee that this account of my conversion, brief as it must be, will resolve itself into something of that sort.

My paternal ancestor came to this country from Marlborough, Wiltshire, England, landing at Boston in 1635, and later moved to Nantucket, where he became a member of the Society of Friends, and his descendants remained fervent Quakers, until my father was "read out of meeting," because he married one of "the world's people." My mother's family were natives of Sussex, and came to America at a much later date. In England they were divided as to their religious belief: a part always remained faithful to the faith of their fathers, and because of the drastic laws against Catholics, suffered severely, both in body and goods; nevertheless, during this time of trial, they gave to the Church abundantly of their substance, and of their

sons and daughters. They were, moreover, willing instruments in God's hands to guard and keep alive the Faith in Sussex, even to this day. Other members of the family apostatized and allied themselves with the English Establishment; while others became non-conformists of various kinds, and some of these, my mother's immediate progenitors, immigrated to New England.

My father and mother in their early married life joined the Unitarians, but ultimately became indifferent to all forms of religion, except a belief that the spirits of the dead have the power to return to earth and commune with the living. They were scrupulously honest toward all, sincere and loyal in their friendships, pure and clean of heart, kind and loving in their relations with their children, ever teaching us to be truthful in our dealings with men, and to be ever fearless in bearing witness to what we believed to be right and true. Of God they told me nothing; and never gave me a higher principle to guide me through life than one largely based upon selfishness, viz., *Honesty is the best policy;* at the same time they planted in my mind a great dislike, not only for all religious forms, but for all forms of religion, and also an aggressive contempt for anything in the nature of dogma. The result of this training was that I grew up a pagan of the pagans, a mere worldling, with a vague belief in the existence of God, none in the immortality of the soul, and very

little in the uprightness of man; therefore it was not surprising that early in life pleasure became the end of my existence. I was eaten up with self-love, and found nothing of value except those things and persons that ministered to that love. As I grew older, like all children of the world, I became the victim of satiety and ennui, completely tired of the world and weary of myself, and at times, I would have gladly welcomed death. It is true, that now and then, a voice within my heart would whisper of a possible higher and better and more manly life than the one I was living, of a love more stable than I had heretofore found among men, of a possible motive upon which to build a useful and unselfish life. At such times, I was brought face to face with the riddle of human existence, with those momentous questions, which come sooner or later into the mind of every thinking being, namely, where did I come from? what am I here for? and where am I going? But alas! wheresoever I turned to find a solution of these questions, I met only with disappointment and disgust. And further, I was appalled at the mystery of pain, the inequalities of the lot of man, and the seeming unjust division of the good things of life. Finding no answer to my questions, no solution to my difficulties, it transpired in time that the higher aspirations of my soul, struggling for recognition, were smothered, hushed and buried under a most complete indifference.

Bound in the ignoble chains of an agnostic pessimism; closing my eyes to the higher needs of my nature, and forgetting the miseries of my fellowmen, I no longer cared for, nor had any interest in anything, with a single exception, outside of the study of the material forces, of nature, of those things which can be seen, handled, weighed and measured. This single exception was a passionate love for history and archæology, to which I gave a great deal of time and study; and this study, under God's grace, ultimately led me to the source of all knowledge, all truth, and to the fountain of the waters of reconciliation.

My conversion came about in this way: A brother of mine fell into an argument with a friend concerning the life of Christ and the truth of Christianity, and subsequently this friend gave him a book to read upon the subject, viz., "Nelson's Cure of Infidelity," which work fell into my hands. Although the author's reasoning was weak, and often incorrect, and altogether unconvincing, nevertheless, the book forced me to the knowledge that I knew very little, or nothing concerning the life of Christ, or about the Christian faith, the history of its planting and propagation. To remove this gross ignorance, and with the intention of getting a general idea of the subject, I read the New Testament through, always regarding it, however, as a collection of historical documents of doubtful authenticity, yet of sufficient authority as to the ordinary facts

therein narrated. At the same time I supplemented this reading by studying the "Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius" (A. D. 325), and "The First Apology of Justin Martyr (A. D. 139). When I had finished this investigation, Jesus of Nazareth had become a living reality to me — as much so as Plato — and henceforth I looked upon him as an historical character, if nothing more. This was a great step, as I had hitherto been inclined to believe Him a mythical being. Again I went over the same course of reading, and the more I studied the life and works of Christ, the greater grew my admiration for His character. Almost immediately I saw that if it were stripped of its supernatural qualities, it would be meaningless and contradictory. An early Christian writer truthfully said "that when the intellect has been enlightened by truth, our Lord comes to take up His abode in our hearts." [1] So it was not surprising that this newly acquired knowledge acted as a goad to spur me on to further study. At once I took up all the Christian writers of the first three hundred years, together with a few of the post-Nicene authors. I read them carefully through, in order that I might clearly understand what the followers of the Apostles and the promoters of the Faith, thought and taught concerning their Master. I then made a comparison and an analysis of the historical testimony concerning the public life of Jesus and that of Alexander the

[1] S. Gregory the Great, A. D. 540–604.

Great, only to find, as all will who make a similar investigation, that for every documentary, monumental, and traditional witness to the life and deeds of the Grecian hero, there were a greater number, and more trustworthy ones, for those of Jesus of Nazareth. In addition, in the case of Jesus, I found two classes of witnesses peculiar to Him, and of the greatest value, viz., the Jewish Prophets, who foretold His life; and the Christian martyrs: thousands of men and women and even children, the noblest of the human race, who, at the time of the planting of the Faith, willingly and gladly laid down their lives as a testimony of the truth of the Gospel narrative. So overwhelming was the evidence in favor of the truth of the life, words and works of Jesus Christ, as recorded in Holy Writ, that I was compelled, willingly or unwillingly, to either doubt all history, all human testimony, or to believe in Him and His divine mission to mankind. In the meantime, from purely metaphysical reasons, scientific conclusions and limitations, the existence of a Personal God became vividly true to me. I saw clearly the preservation of our identity after death, man's true place in creation, and the necessity of something to unite his nature with the nature of God, in other words, religion. The moment my historical research led me to believe in the historic Christ, I entered into the fulness of faith. What was this faith that had mastered my understanding? First, that there was one God, and

that *all things were made by Him, and without Him was made nothing that was made.* Second, that man is placed above all created beings and naught save God will satisfy his highest aspirations. Third, that God became manifest to man in the person of Jesus Christ, *His only-begotten Son;* and that this Word of God (the one Mediator of Redemption), to whom all power was given, delegated to a certain body of men the authority to teach all nations, to observe all things whatsoever He had commanded and taught: *And Jesus coming, spoke to them, saying, All power is given to me in heaven and earth. Going therefore teach ye all nations: baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.*[2] This Word made flesh further promised this organization of men, that *the gates of hell shall not prevail against it,*[3] that the Holy Spirit would abide *with it and guide it into all truth,*[4] and that He, Himself, would never abandon it, for He said, *I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world.*[5] With this faith, there entered into my heart a desire to do God's will, and from this desire was born a spirit of prayer, and for the first time in my life my soul spoke to its Creator. My conscience was awakened, my will was ready to act in obedience to God's laws, and all things con-

[2] Matt. xxviii, 18–20.
[3] Matt. xvi, 18.
[4] John xiv, 16; xvi, 13.
[5] Matt. xxviii, 20.

strained me to place myself under the guidance of grace. The battle was won: right reason and honesty of purpose had triumphed over ignorance, prejudice and love of the world. But what was I to do? who was to lead me into the way of right living? Where was I to find the living, speaking voice of God and His Christ? Where was this body of men to whom the Master said: *He that heareth you heareth me?* [6] Where was this *Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth?* [7] Where was this *one fold and the one shepherd?* [8] Where was this kingdom *built upon the foundation of the Apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone* [9]— that keeps the *unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace: one body, one spirit — one Lord, one faith, one baptism?* [10] Where was this organization founded by Christ, this church built upon the rock: *I say to thee, that thou art Peter; and upon this rock (Peter) I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it?* [11] Where was this church that has the power of binding and loosing: *Whatsoever you shall bind upon earth, shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever you shall loose upon earth, shall be loosed in heaven?* [12] Where was this church I was to hear: *If he will not hear the*

[6] Luke x, 16.
[7] Tim. iii, 15.
[8] John x, 16.
[9] John x, 16.
[10] Eph. iv, 5.
[11] Matt. xvi, 18.
[12] Matt. xvi, 19.

Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and the publican? Where was this Church with an unbroken continuity of government, of authority, and of teaching from the Apostles to this day? Had the words of Christ failed? and His promises proved worthless? No. For when I cast my eyes upon Christendom, I saw that there was one body that claimed these prerogatives, to the exclusion of all others; and moreover, plainly bore the marks that substantiate the claim. The marks were: —

I. Apostolicity: *The persevering in the doctrine of the Apostles,*[13] and in the communication of the breaking of bread and in prayers; *whose succession of bishops has come down to us.*[13] "The Apostles have preached to us from the Lord Jesus Christ: Jesus Christ from God. Christ, therefore, was sent by God and the Apostles by Christ.[14] The Apostles in turn have sent others to carry on their mission, and this Church has the power to enumerate those who were, by the Apostles, instituted bishops in the churches, and the successors of those bishops down to ourselves." [15]

II. Authority: *For how shall they preach unless they be sent,*[16] "grounded on the instruction given by the Apostles, hold fast, and teaching to the people, that faith which in nothing differs from the institutions of our forefathers," [17] and "have a succession from the Apostles — who, with the succes-

[13] Acts ii, 42; Romans x, 15; Eph. iv, 11–14; I Tim. ii, 2.
[14] St. Clement, A. D. 68.
[15] Idem.
[16] Rom. x, 15.
[17] St. Damascus, A. D. 370.

sion of the episcopate, have received, according to the good will of the Father, the sure gift (grace) of truth." [18]

III. Unity: *For there shall be one fold and one shepherd* [19] for "God is one, and Christ is one, and the Church and the Chair one, founded, by the Lord's word, upon a rock; another altar, or a new priesthood beside the one altar and the one priesthood, cannot be set up"; [20] *whosoever gathereth elsewhere, scattereth.*

IV. Visibility: *A city seated on a mountain cannot be hid.*[21] "It is an easier thing for the sun to be quenched, than for the Church to be made invisible," [22] and so "with the light of the Lord" the Church "puts forth her rays throughout the whole world, yet the light is one which is spread over every place, while its unity of body is preserved." [23]

V. Indefectibility: *His kingdom shall have no end*,[24] "a city on earth impregnable," [25] and "though the gates of hell are many, and almost countless, not one of them shall prevail against the rock (Peter), or against the Church which Christ built upon it." [26] It is true "she may be overcast with clouds, but fail she cannot, where Peter (rock)

[18] St. Irenæus, A. D. 178.
[19] St. John x, 16.
[20] S. Cyprian, A. D. 248.
[21] Matt. v, 14.
[22] St. John Chrysostom, A. D. 387.
[23] S. Cyprian.
[24] Luke i, 31–33.
[25] St. Clement of Alexandria, A. D. 190.
[26] Origen, A. D. 216.

is, there the Church is, where the Church is there death is not, but life eternal." [27] It is also true "she may indeed be shaken by persecution, but never can be over-thrown; be tried, not conquered," [28] because the Lord God Almighty "has promised He will effect this, and His promise is nature's law." [29]

VI. Sanctity: *Christ also so loved the Church, and delivered Himself up for it; that He might sanctify it, cleansing it by the laver of water in the word of life, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church;* [30] he, therefore, "believes in God, who confesses in God a holy Church," [31] the mother of saints.

VII. Catholicity: *The Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony to all nations.*[32] "The Christians are not one nation, but out of all nations one people;" [33] and "neither do the Churches founded in Germany nor those in Spain, in Gaul, in the East, in Egypt, in Africa, nor in the regions of the middle of the earth, believe or deliver a different faith." [34]

It was plain to my eyes, and it is easy to be seen by all, that the one Church claiming to be the only Church of Christ, and at the same time bearing all these Marks of Authenticity, to the exclusion of

[27] S. Ambrose, A. D. 385.
[28] S. Jerome, A. D. 390.
[29] Idem.
[30] Eph. v, 25.
[31] S. Peter Chrysologus, A. D. 440.
[32] Matt. xxiv, 14; Acts i, 8.
[33] Origen.
[34] S. Irenæus.

all other organizations, was the Holy Roman Catholic Church. That Church "in which the primacy of the Apostolic See has always been in force," [35] "from whence the unity of the priesthood has its source." [36] And "having the office of heading the Churches of the whole world"; [37] "holding the primacy that it may receive the complaints of all." [38] Standing "in the same relation to other Episcopal Churches as the Apostle Peter stood to the rest of the Apostles," [39] to whom the Lord Christ said: *Thou, being converted, confirm thy brethren* — "that is, become the support and teacher of those who come to me by faith"; [40] upon whom alone the Lord Christ enjoined the care of all the flock of the *one sheepfold,* for to him He said: *Peter lovest thou me? Feed my sheep* —that is he committed to Peter, "the Chief of the Apostles, that unbroken rock, the foundation of the Church," [41] the sheep for whom He shed His blood. Moreover, it was just as plain to me, and to be seen by all who look, that all other Christian organizations "mutually refuted and condemned each other," [42] for among them there are as many faiths as wills, and that each one was the offspring of some disobedient Catholic, and in most cases bore his name. "Before Valentinus there were no Valentinians; nor

[35] S. Augustine.
[36] S. Cyprian.
[37] Theodoret, A. D. 424.
[38] Pope Boniface, A. D. 422.
[39] S. Optatus, A. D. 368.
[40] S. Cyril of Alexandria, A. D. 424.
[41] St. John Chrysostom.
[42] S. Ephrem.

Marcionites before Marcion," [43] nor Arians before Arius, nor Manichæism before Manes, nor Pelagians before Pelagius; and coming down nearer to our own time: before Luther there were no Lutherans, nor Calvinists before Calvin. All of these so called Christian Churches at the best were nothing more than branches torn off the parent tree; "called indeed after Christ's name, yet not His, but are, some of them, at very great distance from Him; whilst others, on account of some very slight matters, are disinherited, and have made themselves and their children aliens unto Him; they are not within the boundaries, but have established themselves without, and have nothing of Christ but the name." [44] These facts, together with the fact, that the Apostles preached, not themselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and that not a single sect or church is called after any one of them, made it more and more evident to me that "they ceased to be Christians, who, having lost the name of Christ, assumed human and extraneous titles." [45] I saw then how true were the words of the great Saint Cyprian, written in the third century, "The spouse of Christ cannot become adulterate; she is undefiled and chaste; she owns but *one house;* with spotless purity, she guards the sanctity of *one chamber.* She keeps us for God; she appoints unto the kingdom the sons she has borne. Whosoever, having separated from the

[43] S. Irenæus.
[44] S. Epiphanius, A. D. 385.
[45] Lactantius, A. D. 320.

Church, is joined to an adulteress, he is cut off from the promises of Christ. Neither shall he come unto the reward of Christ who leaves the Church of Christ. He is an alien, he is an outcast, he is an enemy. He can no longer have God for a Father, who has not the Church for a mother."

The more I studied the history of private judgment, the source of heresy and schism, the plainer I saw that the Church of Christ, "begotten from one faith, and brought forth by means of the Holy Ghost," [46] must of necessity be endowed with a continuity of authority and doctrine, or it could not be of God.

I had now travelled three different roads, only to find myself, at the end of each journey, at the threshold of the Catholic Church, viz., by studying, first: the history of the Faith as set forth in Holy Writ, the writings of the Fathers, the canons, the liturgies, and the lives of the Saints; second: the history of the Faith, as set forth in the teachings and careers of heresiarchs, the rise, waning and extinction of heresies and schisms; third: the history of the Faith as shown by the preservation of the Church, in spite of the scandalous lives of some of her children, and the worldly ambition of others.

At last the eyes of my soul were fully opened, I had passed from darkness to light, I saw the folly of my past life. God's Holy Will was now easy to read: "Take thou, and hold that faith only as a

[46] St. Cyprian.

learner, and in profession, which is now by the Church delivered to thee." [47]

There was but one thing left for me to do, so I sought an introduction to a priest, in order to make profession of my belief, to be baptized, and to bring my life under the sweet yoke of Christ. The Very Rev. Isaac T. Hecker examined me as to my faith, and almost immediately I was admitted to the sacraments by the Rev. George Deshon. Much to my surprise, I discovered, through the examinations I underwent, that I was in possession of the entire system of Christian dogma; and Fathers Hecker and Deshon were equally surprised to find that it was unnecessary to give me any instruction whatsoever before admitting me to the Church. How did I come to this knowledge? where had I learned the teachings of the Catholic Church? From the Holy Bible and the early Christian writers, for up to the time of my baptism, I had never read, or so much as had in my hands, a book of Catholic theology, instruction or controversy; nor had I any conversation with a Catholic, either layman or cleric, upon the subject of religion. My historical studies, my reading, my reasoning from cause to effect, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, had brought me into the Catholic Church, and gave me a knowledge of its teachings. The grace of God, the words of Christ: *What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?* keeps me

[47] St. Cyril of Jerusalem, A. D. 363.

there. And I can say with St. Augustine, in all truth, "the agreement of peoples and of nations keeps me; an authority begun with miracles, nourished with hope, increased with charity, confirmed by antiquity, keeps me; the succession of priests from the chair itself of the Apostle Peter — unto whom the Lord, after His resurrection committed His sheep to be fed — down even to the present bishop (Pius X), keeps me; finally, the name itself of the Catholic Church keeps me — a name which in the midst of many heresies, this Church alone has, not without cause, so held possession of, as that, although all heretics would fain have themselves called Catholic, yet to the inquiry of any stranger, Where is the meeting of the Catholic Church held? no heretic would dare to point out his own basilica, or meeting-house. These ties, therefore, so numerous and powerful, of the Christian name — ties most dear — justly keep a believing man in the Catholic Church." And why not? For that which the Catholic Church teaches, it "received from the Apostles, the Apostles from Christ, Christ from God," a church *built upon the Apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone*[48] *—who has loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood.*[49]

Many years have passed since my baptism, and in the meanwhile, I have seen the Church in many climes and among many nationalities; I have read

[48] Eph. ii, 20. [49] Apocal, i, 5.

hundreds of lives of her saintly children; I have partaken of her Sacraments, tried to live her life, and now, I have but one testimony to give: *How beautiful art thou, my love! — how beautiful art thou! Thou art all fair, O my love, and there is not a spot in thee — fair as the moon, bright as the sun, terrible as an army set in array.*

THE REV. JOHN E. COPUS,

Priest of the Society of Jesus; author of books for boys.

The earliest religious impressions of which I have at this time distinct recollection, were connected with the Church of England. Shortly after coming home from boarding school I was admitted with some secrecy and no little formality, to the fellowship of a coterie of men, who were for that period and place, quite advanced Ritualists. One was the organist of a parish church, another an assistant curate of my native town of Guildford, England. Several held positions in various government departmental offices, and many were old school companions.

At first, attracted by the æsthetic value of architecture, ornamentation and ecclesiastical music, I, with several others of the little coterie, attached an overwhelming importance to symbolism, and to the more harmless forms of ritualism, such as turning to the East when reciting the Creed, elaborate bowing of the head at the Gloria, and (by a bold extravagance) openly making the Sign of the Cross during the service.

We were members of a private High-church guild, or society, few in numbers, but quite aggres-

sive, and we considered ourselves very "advanced," and quite tolerant towards Rome. This was about the year 1865. About that period there was a controversy on the question of baptismal regeneration. There were some "Evangelicals" in the Established Church who repudiated it. Our guild, although there was much difference of opinion on many points, made a firm stand on this issue.

At that time I, in common with others of this little society, was very proud of and enthusiastic over the doctrines we held, and we felt as though we were a privileged and segregated class, destined, in some way not very clear at the time, but destined nevertheless to leaven the whole mass of evangelical inertness in the English Church into a symbolic and ritualistic activity. How we were to accomplish these things, or when, was not very plain to us, but we felt that a way would be made. We cultivated an attenuated devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. I doubt if, at that time, one of us had ever heard of the Immaculate Conception, and it is most probable that we would have rejected it had that doctrine been proposed to us. We burned two candles, nevertheless, before her picture in our private oratory when we recited complin.

All the rectors of the churches of my native town were, at that time, evangelicals or "Low" churchmen. The Tractarian movement had not, as yet, gained much impetus in the place of my birth, and I was quite willing to subscribe to the following

question, and answer, of the English Church catechism.

"How many sacraments has Christ ordained in His Church?"

"Two only as generally necessary for salvation, that is to say Baptism and the Supper of the Lord."

Looking backward all this appears now mere opera bouffe, but at that time it was a very serious matter with myself and my companions of the coterie. Of course we had no spiritual director, and we were, although we did not realize it, as truly Protestant as the most evangelical churchman, for every one of us was guided by his own private opinion in what we should believe as well as practice. Sometimes these practices bordered on the severity of the anchorets of the desert. An instance: One Good Friday we walked five miles to a picnic grounds where we endeavored to conduct a sort of open-air "Three Hours' Agony" service. The attempt was not successful, for in Protestant England Good Friday is regarded as a holiday and a day of merry-making, rather than of devotion. We walked home, and until near seven o'clock that evening nothing, not even a drop of water, had passed our lips. My father met me upon my return, and, observing my pinched face and blue lips, wanted to take me to a hotel and give me a dinner. When I refused, he remarked: "This Puseyism is as bad as popery. You will all be Papists before you know it."

Not long after this I lived for two years in Rochester and under the guidance of a curate of a succursal chapel — formerly a mediæval leper chapel — I was confirmed in the cathedral that had once known Fisher, the martyr, as its bishop. I remember that I was dissatisfied with the ceremony. The bishop, I thought, ought to have been vested in mitre and cope. He wore the ordinary balloon surplice with black satin bands at the wrists, no cassock, a black stole and a university hood. At that time my knowledge of the sacramental system was so vague that I should not have been able to answer definitely, had I been asked, whether the ceremony in which I had just participated were a sacrament or not. My impression was that it was a very respectable function.

My growth in doctrinal knowledge and in a realization of the Church as an exposition and continuation of the work that Christ established came when I accepted a position as master in the parish school of St. Peter, Folkestone. The perpetual curate of St. Peter's was the celebrated Father Ridsdale, who was for so many years prosecuted, and, as some think, persecuted, in the Court of Arches for ritualistic practices.

He was very advanced; celebrated Mass with colored vestments, maintained a convent of Sisters, had Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, Stations, beads, holy water, and in fact all the religious paraphernalia that may be found in a well equipped

Catholic church. The rood-screen of St. Peter's, dividing the sanctuary from the body of the church was one of the finest specimens of modern ecclesiastical hand-wrought ironwork in England.

Father Ridsdale was devotedness itself, and I never entertained a doubt of his entire good faith. He recited the Roman Breviary daily, lived a celibate life, made an annual retreat, and his zeal in parish work and among the poorer classes was unbounded. Here I began the practice of auricular confession, and of receiving communion under one kind, and while fasting, here, also, under the favoring auspices of this good man I began to acquire not only a fuller knowledge of the sacramental system, but a broader grasp of the whole economy of the Redemption and a fuller appreciation of the value and necessity of prayer, and a glimpse into the doctrine of the Communion of Saints.

In school and Sunday-school, and pulpit, Father Ridsdale taught openly the existence and the persistence of the English branch of the Catholic Church, the seven sacraments, invocation of saints, purgatory and many other Catholic beliefs and practices. The Rosary was recited publicly, and St. Peter's possessed a Society of the Blessed Sacrament — a truly wonderful thing in the English Church of thirty years ago. This unashamed avowal of the Church's teaching and its unhidden practice in our own "branch" was a delight to me. I was, consequently, very happy at this period of

my life. Thoroughly imbued with the "branch" theory, and being more attracted by external and ritualistic observances with all their æsthetic beauty than by theological or doctrinal arguments, and having this æsthetic sense satisfied by a beautiful church with its high altar, wonderfully beautiful statues, a reserved Sacrament, fine music (Gregorian) and good preaching — I look back on this period of my life and wonder that so much peacefulness and contentment were allotted to one individual. It was, however, a calm before a time of stress and storm.

Perhaps it will not be uninteresting to relate here some of the events that happened to me at this period. After the lapse of years these happenings now appear to have the tinge of the serio-comic, but they certainly did not possess that quality to me when transpiring. Fathers Ridsdale, Stanton, Mackonochie, Body, and a few others, were regarded as the most advanced Puseyites, or ultra-tractarians along in the Sixties. A logical consequence of their position was that they were compelled to recognize and admit as one of their party the celebrated Father Ignatius, the English Church monk, who had established his monastery of Llantony, at Abergavenny, in Monmouthshire, Wales. Not a few of the High Church clergy regarded him as an excrescence, but after much consultation it was decided among the more advanced to sanc-

tion his position in the Establishment and extend to him the use of their pulpits once a year. It was at one of these annual sermons at St. Peter's, Folkestone, that I first saw this remarkable, if eccentric, man.

It has been my good fortune to hear many pulpit orators in two worlds, but nothing I have heard since has equalled this man's oratorical powers when he was in his prime. Since that time the English Church has seen many strange happenings, but in those early days the sight of a brown habit, sandalled feet, a white cord, and a shaven head in an English church pulpit was a sensation indeed. Irrespective of the dramatic or poetic appearance of the speaker, there was in him a force and fire of eloquence, a power of exposition, and a magnetism, coupled with extraordinary rhetorical richness, and a marvellous voice that easily mastered all the tones, which resulted in creating a furore throughout the land that has rarely been equalled.

During my first interview I asked Father Ignatius how he came to adopt his monastic mode of life — a rather crude question under the circumstance and for which an excuse might be found in the adolescence of the questioner.

"It came about in this way," replied the monk. "One day at Oxford we were going from college to chapel across the college green. Some one casually remarked: 'Ye monks going to vespers,' and

the thought 'Why not?' came to me as an inspiration, and from that time I determined to reintroduce monasticism into England."

"Do you know," he continued, "that for a long time I studied carefully the rules of the different founders of religious orders, and I began to believe that I would have to turn Roman Catholic to accomplish my purpose, when, fortunately, I found a rule that did not necessitate being a Roman."

He paused dramatically, and when I asked the name of the rule, he replied:

"The Benedictine Rule."

He was serious. He was too great an enthusiast to give the slightest evidence of even a shadow of levity. Not at the time, nor for several years after, did I see the unconscious humor of the reply — a humor which the devoted sons of St. Benedict will be as quick to see and enjoy as anyone.

"Many miracles attended the opening of our monastery," was his somewhat startling continuation. "We had purchased some old abbey lands in Wales and we wanted very much to celebrate the opening of a part of the monastery by a midnight Mass on Christmas Day. An old monastery bell had been discovered on the land and disinterred, and we hung it in the tower. Now would you believe me, sir, on the stroke of midnight on that Christmas night that old monastery bell pealed out the Angelus! We fell on our knees and adored!

Angels rang that bell! No mortal hand touched it. An evident miracle!"

The Angelus at midnight was a little out of the ordinary time, but one should not be too particular on an occasion like this. I enquired of Father Ridsdale later whether credence should be given to the story. He replied, with a significant smile: "Mr. Lyne" (the family name) "is rather enthusiastic." I found later that the story of the angelic bell-ringer was not generally accredited, and most of those who heard it gave the credit to the more material sexton of the monastery. An unusually generous collection, or an unexpected donation of building material was regarded by Father Ignatius as "an evident miracle."

Once I paid Father Ignatius a visit when he was staying with a clergyman other than Father Ridsdale. I was ushered into a private oratory, unlighted save for the flicker of the red flame of an altar lamp. Suddenly a shadowy figure was seated near me. "You wish to see me, my child?"

I did wish to *see* him, but in the gloom that was not possible. I have always thought that Father Ignatius imagined I had come to him as a postulant begging admission to his monastery, because he took much pains to describe to me the method of life pursued there. With remarkable cleverness he made it appear to possess a mystical, mediæval romanticism which was extremely captivating. I distinctly remember one description which he gave.

"There is a constant process," he said, "of disintegration going on in the monastery. Many come and write home letters describing how romantic it is to lie in bed and hear the monks chanting the Office in the choir at midnight — so mediæval and all that, you know. Well, these young men look at the poetry of the life, but not at the prose, and they do not remain."

"We try our novices severely," he continued. "Lately the son of a nobleman joined us. One day there were a number of visitors within the enclosure, some of whom were acquainted with the novice and his family. I turned to him in their hearing, and said:—

"This life of a monk is much easier for you than selling pins and needles over a draper's counter, is it not?" I saw the hot blood of anger mount to his face, and he was on the point of making a retort when he caught sight of the heroic-sized crucifix in the centre of the enclosure, and he dropped his eyes in meek submission, and turned silently away."

At the close of the interview in the weirdly darkened room I was suddenly startled when I found some rough, coarse material rubbed across my lips. As the shadowy form of the monk vanished through the door I realized the somewhat amusing fact that, all unconsciously, I had with my lips touched the "hem of his garment," but not with anything corresponding to the dispositions of those who per-

formed a similar action, as recorded in the Gospel.

Whether Father Ridsdale had heard of my visit to the monk, and was afraid of losing his school-master I do not know, but one day soon after the interview he said to me:

"Do not make any change in your life as yet. Do not enter into any permanent state at present. We do not know what is in the future. We may, you and I, open a monastery some day right here at home without going to Wales."

This was a startling suggestion, and led at the time to many rose-colored day-dreams regarding the future. But nothing came of it. My time of content and tranquillity was at length drawing to a close. It was an apparently insignificant circumstance that was the beginning of a series of events that finally turned the current of existence into other channels.

One evening I was dining with Father Ridsdale and it happened to be a Friday. My clerical friend had rooms near the church in a house whose owner and wife were Catholics. We finished our soup and the good housewife placed the second course on the table. Father Ridsdale lifted the shining metal dish-cover, and behold! *a roast of beef!*

I do not think I shall ever forget the look on his face at that moment. Some sharp words followed between him and his landlady — not housekeeper, remember — and the impression left upon me was that she was sarcastic and a little impertinent as she

left the room. After apologies for the mistake, he begged me, of my charity, to eat what was provided.

"Upon the chair of Moses have sitten the Scribes and Pharisees. Whatsoever they shall command, that observe and do, but according to their works do ye not."

My esteem and respect for Father Ridsdale remained. There was, nevertheless, one drop of the poison of doubt injected into my veins by this incident. In the retrospect I can now see that this little incident was the beginning of the unsettlement of my belief in the Apostolicity of the English Church. Abstinence, I knew, was but a question of discipline, but I began to realize there was a lack of unanimity in discipline even among "Catholics," which term I understood to include Mr. Ridsdale and myself as surely as it did the most perfervid "Roman."

When the vacation of that summer approached I was warned by Father Ridsdale not to go into a Catholic church. "They will tell you," he said, "that at the time of the Reformation the English bishops were excommunicated, but they will not tell you that the excommunication ceases with the death of those excommunicated."

His advice was followed, not that the statement interested me, but because I was convinced that the English "branch" of the Catholic Church had Mass, and it did not appear to me of much impor-

tance whether I heard it in an English Catholic or a Roman Catholic church.

The events related happened during my second year's residence at Folkestone. During the first year's vacation I took a leisurely walking trip among the towns on the south coast of England. By the end of the next school year I had become, if I may be allowed the expression, more religious, in the sense that I knew more of my religion and had gained a higher appreciation of the spiritual part of our nature. The idea of another walking tour was now distasteful, and I went home at once to Guildford.

Here I realized to a startling degree the great difference between the Folkestone "Catholicism" of which I was enamored, and the broad, or low, theories prevailing in my native town. For the first time I began to long for a church with unity of doctrine and practice, and yet there was no thought of deserting Anglo-Catholicism.

An event, trivial as I now view it in the retrospect, but which was by no means so at the time, led me a step further Romeward that summer. As before remarked, while at Folkestone it was my habit to go regularly to confession. I looked in vain in my native place for a priest through whose ministrations I could continue this practice. Not even the young curate of our former guild (now moribund) was advanced enough to permit him to hear confessions.

One of my old school companions told me of a certain rector who was getting "high" and had even showed a floral cross on the altar of his church the preceding Easter. One Saturday evening I called at the rectory. He was dining, but the butler showed me to the drawing room and requested me to wait a few minutes. Presently a rubicund and good-natured looking gentleman appeared — an excellent illustration in the flesh of the Good and Easy clergyman of Marshall's "Comedy of Convocation." Offering me a seat in a leather-covered chair, he was urbanity itself as he ensconced himself in another.

"I want to go to confession," I said, somewhat bluntly, for I was a little annoyed at the contrast of things in my native land and Folkestone.

"Confession! eh! what —"

"You are a priest, I believe, of the English Church?"

"Certainly — certainly — but —"

"I have been living on the sea-coast where priests of the Church of England hear confessions regularly."

"Indeed! but I —

"— and I shall be much pleased if you will afford me the opportunity of continuing the practice of making auricular confession. May I make my confession to you?"

He did not answer immediately, but arose and went to a bookcase and brought back to his seat a

book of Common Prayer. Turning over the leaves he at last settled on a page and put the book on the broad arm of his chair.

"Have you anything, my young friend, that is particularly burdening your conscience?"

"No, sir, nothing particular that I am aware of," I replied. I was desirous of making what I learned later was called among Catholics, a confession of devotion.

"Do you give alms to those in need?"

"Occasionally I bestow a little in charity," I replied.

"Do you think that you fulfill all your obligations as a Christian?" was the next question.

I could plainly see that he had turned in the prayer-book to the Visitation of the Sick, where the rubrics prescribe that the sick person after he has unburdened his conscience of those things that are oppressing it, and expressed sorrow of heart, shall receive absolution from the priest.

"And then the priest shall say," etc.

Here follows the words of absolution, in English, of course, and very close to the essential part in the Roman formula.

The good man considered for a long time. He had probably never been placed in so critical a position before. He was face to face with the question of his own priesthood.

"Yes," he said, musingly, as if trying to make up his mind, "yes, I am a priest, and here is the

formula that is to be used in forgiving sins. I suppose it is all correct."

I then knelt down at his armchair, told the story I had to tell, and he pronounced the words, reading them carefully from the book. His right hand was not raised, and no mention was made of imposing a penance. The dignified, elderly gentleman, in the correctest of clerical black, and clerical cut of his coat, appeared immensely relieved when that which must have been an ordeal for him, was over. During the remainder of that vacation, when I desired to go to confession, I ran up to St. Alban's, High Holborn, the most famous ritualistic church in London at that time. This good and simple soul afterwards became a bishop in one of the British colonies.

Neither the Friday dinner episode, nor the anomaly I have just related actually unsettled me. I remained another year as the school-master of Father Ridsdale's church school, but, in some way, much of the glamour had disappeared. The content which I had previously enjoyed was lessened, yet I was firmly convinced that Apostolic succession was possessed by our "branch."

At this period I was vexed, or perhaps startled, when an acquaintance, a staunch Anglican was reported to have "gone over." I think a real unsettling began when, one day, an assistant of Father Ridsdale informed me, not as a secret, but as a piece of information freely circulated among

the High Church party, that there were a number of the younger advanced clergymen in England who went over to the continent and received a second ordination to the priesthood by the Jansenist bishops of Holland, "to make assurance doubly sure."

That some of the clergy of my own Church actually doubted the validity of their ordination was a great shock to me, but even then my faith in the English Church did not waver. I began, nevertheless, to search within the church for some definite and absolute authority whose pronouncement on this vital question would be final. I, with many other High Church laymen, had chosen His Grace of Canterbury to represent for us and to us the ecclesiastical authority in the English "branch," and we generously conceded to the Bishop of Rome the same authority in the Roman "branch." We were soon in a quandary, for we saw that the Archbishop of Canterbury was by no means in doctrinal accord with many of his episcopal brethren. I had a great repugnance towards the Greek Church, but for the very existence of my own position I was compelled to recognize it as the third "branch" of the true Church. The more closely I looked into the question, the more clearly I saw that our own bishops were at doctrinal variance among themselves, and some of them were impregnated with Erastianism. I was unable to discover a voice of authority, but I

still clung to the stability of the Church of England, although I began, with some misgivings, to realize more fully the absence of unity of doctrine. I saw that the High Church party was a kind of *imperium in imperio*, opposed in doctrine to a large number of the bishops and to the vast majority of laymen.

Safe now in the bosom of the Church, possessing and enjoying the blessings of the gift of faith, it is comparatively easy to look back and be surprised at my denseness and dullness in things spiritual. Of one thing I am sure, namely, that there was no diminution of my good faith. As every convert knows from his own experience, the condition of mind, even when one is within the very penumbra of faith, is such that those things which are subsequently as clear as the sun at noonday, are then obscure or impenetrable, or are, owing to the peculiar and often tense condition of mind, such as never strongly appeal to the intellect, or demand a solution.

Some time later I accepted a position as master in a large college in the suburbs of Bath, Somersetshire, in the west of England. There were nearly five hundred students at this institution. On Sunday mornings they were sent, in charge of masters, to the different churches in the city of Bath. One Sunday in the Spring of 1876 I was assigned to one of the city churches in charge of about seventy students. The church to which I

had taken my company of boys was a very high church, and to my satisfaction, bore a strong resemblance to St. Peter's at Folkestone. "High Mass" was celebrated, and the priest wore colored vestments. The sermon was on the sacrament of penance, and the Mass.

I was jubilant, and made up my mind to be an attendant at this church as often as possible, little dreaming of the tragedy that was soon to follow. Now, I thought, all my difficulties and uneasiness will be laid to rest. Here was a priest who not only had the courage of his doctrinal convictions, but who spoke as one having authority. I would rely upon him. Why had I been myself uneasy? I was a member of the English branch of the Catholic Church and here was a priest after my own heart. I would, therefore, bow to him in submission. I did not then see that my obedience was to be of my own choosing, and that I had exercised private opinion in this case as fully as I had been exercising it unconsciously all my life. My pleasant dreams were of short duration. There came a dreadful shattering, and for a brief period my world was in ashes!

On the following Sunday I again took the students to the same church. But lo! a transformation! The high altar, candles, lamps, flowers, incense, vestments and the priest were gone! The powers that be — that is, the omnipotent churchwardens of the parish — had arisen during the

week in their might and the incumbent had been deposed, either by forcing him to resign, or by getting him removed by his bishop. Instead of an altar there was now a low table; instead of a devotional musical service with a vested priest and attendant servers and a dignified ceremonial, there was restored the old-fashioned "parson-and-clerk" raucus duet in the morning prayers and abbreviated communion service. There was no music except the singing of hymns. The sermon flatly contradicted and denied the doctrines preached in the same church and from the same pulpit the Sunday before.

I then asked myself how that church could be, not the true church, but a true church, which could, within eight days, from the same pulpit, teach diametrically opposite doctrines by accredited and official expounders of its creed. This was the beginning of the end for me. To remain in the faith, I must leave the English Church. I had come to the end of my long road.

Within a month from the event related above, I put myself under the instruction of a priest — the Rev. J. N. Sweeney, O.S.B., of Bath.

Of the wrench at parting with life-long friends, of being called apostate, traitor and other hard names by former friends, of the sensitiveness of soul, torn and tried by the struggle, or of the apparent coldness and the unsympathetic bearing of one's new co-religionists, there is no need to speak

Few who are Catholics by birth know the actual trials a convert undergoes after his reception into the Church, and fewer still have a correct sympathy for the subject of those trials. Every convert will experience more or less of them, and it is nonsense — nay it is worse, for it is untruth — to try to persuade those coming into the Church that they will escape them. It is part of the price, but the lasting peace of security is worth it all, and a thousand times more.

Has there been an experience of doubts after submission? None whatever. Faith is a divine gift. *Dona Domini sine Penitentia.* The joy of its possession has been ample compensation for all the trials of life. There have been long arid stretches in my life since 1876, but (as it was well put in one of the magazines recently) "It is a fine thing to belong to a great wide old Church if only for the corporate wisdom and patience it acquires. It partakes of the unhurrying confident serenity of things vast and everlasting. Those outside may criticise; some inside may worry; but the great body moves on about its work unashamed and unafraid."

There has never come to me the faintest shadow of a doubt as to the soundness of my position — never. Credo! Credo!

HASKET DERBY, M.D.,

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS.

Son of the late Elias Hasket Derby, Junr., and grandson of General Hasket Derby, of the Revolutionary War; graduate of Amherst.

Although all roads lead to Rome, it was over no single one that my footsteps were directed. Mine was no sudden conversion, but based on the observation, reading and reflection of many years. Constant dropping wears the stone, but this is due to the sum of all the drops and not to the impact of any particular one.

My father, as a young man, was a Unitarian. My mother came of a Presbyterian family. When they were married and came to Boston to live they joined the Episcopal church. In this church we children were baptised and to its services we were taken. Sunday was a dreary day in our family. Sunday-school once, church twice, catechism in the evening, all our favorite sports prohibited, all our books taken away, what wonder if we disliked the day. The church services were unattractive to a child, being long and devoid of external aids to devotion. Our rector was "low," a thorough Calvinist, and preached corresponding doctrine. He never made any impression on me and I stoutly

refused to be confirmed, when those of my own time presented themselves for that rite. The idea of sacramental grace was never presented to us, one must be good in order to receive the sacraments, it was not their reception that aided one to become good.

Yet I owe much to my early religious education. The Episcopal church encourages familiarity with the Scriptures, and such great truths as she teaches are indelibly impressed on the youthful mind.

Thus I grew up, indifferent to all religion. At college all the influences were those of the Congregational denomination; we had a revival once in two years, sweeping in its temporary effect, disastrous ultimately in the main to the cause of religion on account of the many lapses from grace of those who professed to have experienced a change of heart. It was about this time in my life that I first learned anything about the distinctive doctrines of the Catholic church, a book entitled "Alban" having fallen into my hands. It was the story of a Yale student who became a convert to Catholicism during his college course. My imagination was much inflamed by the story, and for a time I burned to follow his example, but it was imagination alone that was thus affected, heart and reason remained untouched. The impression proved an evanescent one.

During my residence abroad as a student, particularly that portion of it that I passed in Austria,

I was extremely impressed by the external beauties of the church, especially by the majestic order of its worship and the dignity of its ceremonies. I often, while living in Vienna, went to Mass. I bought a missal and learned to follow the service. But of the real meaning of that or any other form of religion I had hardly a remote conception. I was careless and indifferent, led a selfish and self gratifying existence, and never paused to think of what I was really placed in this world to do, or what was likely to become of me after I should leave it.

So time went on. I returned home, married, and outwardly conformed to the Episcopal church, of which my wife was a member. It was not till after a bereavement that I first felt the need of a consolation greater than this world can give, as well as of an assured hope in the life to come. I was confirmed and became a communicant.

We attended for years the preaching of Phillips Brooks, my old schoolmate and personal friend. He was a man of great heart, perfect sincerity, and extreme earnestness, but the views he held, or at any rate inculcated, were in many respects vague. The necessity of personal goodness was always insisted on, but the subject of dogma generally avoided. The Good, the Beautiful and the True were held up for our admiration; but plain teaching on the necessity, effect and duty of baptism, the nature of confirmation, the doctrine of

the Eucharist, the teaching office of the Church, were strenuously avoided. I could not help noticing moreover the great change from the doctrines I used as a child to hear from my old pastor, Dr. Vinton, at whose feet Brooks had himself sat. It was a different religion that was now inculcated. And I asked myself the question, "if so great a change has occurred in the lifetime of a single individual, what will be the case in my children's time, and what will be taught their descendants?" Ought a true system of revealed religion to be influenced by such changes? If I was truly taught as a child that the great adversary of mankind was a potent personality, going up and down the world, seeking opportunities of doing mischief, always proffering temptation against which we were to fight, what was the meaning of Brooks' allusions to "a time when men believed in a personal devil." If it were indeed true that there is a hell and that it is eternal, why did no single member of the congregation feel certain whether his rector believed in a hell or not. If Holy Communion were indeed the mystical breaking and partaking of the body and blood of a God who became mortal and died for mankind, what was the propriety in inviting to its reception "all members of Christ's church, by whatever denominational name they might be called," as was Brook's constant custom, thereby gathering in both those who denied baptism to their and all children,

and those who looked upon the Saviour of the world as simply a perfect man and not a deity. If the Scriptures and the Scriptures alone were to be the source from which doctrine was to be drawn, as the Articles of Religion clearly asserted, and if indeed there was a definite revelation from God to man, why were there so many warring sects, each drawing its doctrines from this same book. If these Scriptures directed us to "hear the Church," there must be a church to hear, one that could neither deceive or be deceived. And yet the Articles declared that all churches might have erred and were liable to err.

All this gave me much food for reflection. The lack of earnestness of the church members I came in contact with also struck me. There were of course exceptions, but religion seemed with the majority to be based on subservience to public sentiment, to be only skin deep, put on on Sunday and left off the rest of the week. They jested on sacred subjects, treated the clergy with familiarity and good-natured tolerance, attributed little importance to what seemed to me most serious. I was appointed a delegate to a diocesan convention, and was profoundly and unfavorably impressed by my experience. It was announced that a preliminary religious service, intended especially for the members, would be held. At the appointed time I went, putting aside everything else in order to be present. In the reading desk

was a clergyman whose congregation consisted of three or four old women and one stray man. There was a bishop to be elected at this convention, and the taunts and recriminations that passed between men engaged in this grave task, the applause and hissing in a consecrated edifice, made a most painful impression on me.

A little later a legal friend asked me one day if I had ever looked up the question of Anglican Orders. This was a new subject for me, and I immediately procured and read all the books on both sides that I could find bearing on the matter. Previous to this I had never entertained any doubt of the validity of orders in the Anglican church. But as I read I found that, with the Edwardine Reformation, a substantially new doctrine had taken the place of the old. Previous to this time the central office of the Church had been the Mass, the unbloody sacrifice offered by the priest for the living and the dead. In the new prayer-book the Mass became a commemorative service and an opportunity for the administration of the Communion rather than a sacrifice. The priest at the altar disappeared and was replaced by the minister at the Lord's Table. To show their contempt for the old state of things the reformers caused, in some churches the altar slab or stone to be removed and to be placed as a step at the church door, that all entering might trample upon it. The sacrifice for the dead, as well as the living,

being abrogated, prayers for the former ceased to be used. The saints, reigning with Christ, were no longer besought to aid us with their suffrages. Devotion to the Mother of God was done away with. And yet all these things had been taught by and practised in the Church universal, as well among those separated from, as those remaining in communion, with the See of Peter, from the earliest times. As the bishop no longer intended to give the priest the power to offer sacrifice, and as the rite of ordination was sedulously altered in order to eliminate from it any such idea, it followed, to my mind, that the orders of the early church were no longer transmitted.

All these things were either true or false. Beyond doubt they had been taught by the Church from time immemorial. This was admitted by the reformers, who stated in one of the "homilies appointed to be read in the churches," that the whole Christian world had been sunk in error and superstition for a thousand years or more. The pure light of the Gospel was, according to them, but now beginning to shine. But Our Lord had, in the beginning promised His Church to be with it to the end of the world, had given it a teaching commission, and secured it against the possibility of teaching error. Either then the promise had failed or the Early Church was right.

Then too Protestants based their faith on an infallible book interpreted by the individual,

guided by the light furnished by the Holy Spirit. What warring sects, what confused and contrary systems had hence arisen! Yet all professed to base their faith on the Bible. It dawned on my comprehension that an infallible revelation must have an equally infallible interpreter. But where was this interpreter to be found? Evidently not where it was expressly disclaimed. But one body claimed infallibility, and that was the Church of Rome.

To which grace was given me to submit.

THE HON. HENRY CLAY DILLON, A.M.

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA.

In answering the question, "Why did you become a Catholic?" I am painfully aware of the fact that I am dealing with a personal matter, likely to be misunderstood, and which will probably provoke criticism. "A decent regard for the opinions of mankind," prompted our forefathers to state the reasons which impelled them to take a new stand among the nations of the earth. When a Protestant, a free thinker, an infidel, if you please, after having arrived at the age of fifty years, and being in full possession of his faculties, faces about, recants his convictions, and adopts the "*Credo*" of the Catholic — a like respect for his old companions in thought requires that he should give good and sufficient reasons therefore. All conversions are the direct result of the interposition of the Holy Spirit. Not even the great Apostle to the Gentiles attempted to formulate his theological reasons for his change of faith until long after the light of heaven fell upon him, and time had been given for mature study and reflection.

I have advanced the belief that it is God's Holy Spirit working in the hearts of men, and not ar-

guments, which convinces and converts. A great sorrow, reverses of fortune, sickness, the prayers of a devout mother or devoted friend (like my good Father John B. Tabb), the contemplation of good works and good examples by faithful servants of God — all or any of these are sufficient to arrest the attention and turn the mind Godward, especially when the heart is yearning for the truth and for the peace of mind which the world cannot give.

Fortunately for me, I was educated in the Protestant Episcopal Church, and in the highest wing of it. We called ourselves Anglican Catholics. In the creed we declared our belief in the "Holy Catholic Church," even while the word Protestant stared at us from the flyleaf of the prayer book. A love of consistency, the exercise of the Protestant right of private judgment, together with the dogmas of Science, falsely so-called, led me away from that excellent communion of devout men and women, and caused me much sorrow at the parting. This right of private judgment, with particular reference to the interpretation of the Scriptures, led me to agnosticism, to Unitarianism, to the very opposite pole of Catholicism. The antidote and corrective was found in the study and practise of the law. This enabled me to see how confusing and destructive such a doctrine would be if applied to the law. Without a court of last resort to interpret the law, we know

that anarchy must prevail. When every man becomes his own interpreter of the law the authority of the government ceases and security to life and property is at an end.

Following this train of thought it was not difficult to trace in history, and see with my own eyes, the effect of such anarchistic doctrines upon the world and upon its own advocates. I saw Protestantism disintegrated and hopelessly divided. Free thought had ended in infidelity. Unable to agree upon what Christ taught, it soon found itself powerless to teach authoritatively the Christian religion. John Calvin had no more right to decide my faith for me than Martin Luther or Thomas Cranmer. The Synod of Dort had no more authority than the Westminister Assembly, and neither of them had, in fact, any authority at all. The leaders being unable to agree, sects multiplied until the doctrine of private interpretation of the Scriptures was reduced to an absurdity. Now, the creed, (belief) of a Protestant Church is the creed of its minister and his is a variation from the school in which he was taught while the members of his congregation are at liberty to believe as much or as little of his teaching as they please.

"Higher Criticism," a name invented for themselves by modern critics to cover up their infidelity has at last relegated the defense of the Bible to the Catholics as "the proper custodian of antiquated fables." In this we observe one of the re-

venges of time: for "Vengeance is Mine, saith the Lord. I will repay." The Catholic Church, which has been so bitterly arraigned by Protestants as the suppressor of the Holy Bible, now leads all Christendom in its defense.

At one time I was fully persuaded that essential unity already existed, and that is still a stock argument, and used very effectively by my Protestant friends. But its invalidity is at once seen when we observe that the very existence of the different sects proves that their differences are essential. Indeed, that very essential difference was an excuse for each separation and for organizing each new sect.

But the time is now ripe for Christian unity. We, who are in the habit of doing business with each other during the week in friendly, trustful, confidence, are about ready to quit hating each other on election day and Sunday. Therefore, I gladly turn my thought and pen away from the past to the future. Little or no progress can be made by dwelling upon our unhappy differences: everything can be gained by united action against the common foe. Let us frankly confess our errors, as I am now doing and return to the jurisdiction of the successor of the Apostles upon whom the Christian Church was built. "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. xvi, 18).

For, regardless of what others might do, the time had come for me to act. It came to me as it did to Newman, and as it will come to all who are longing for Christian unity. We do not control our own ideas, but are controlled by them, and woe be unto that man who does not act according to his convictions. I was convinced that God would not and did not create man and send him adrift in the world without telling him whence he came, what he is here for, and whither he is going. It became clear to me, as an historical fact, that this revelation was not only made to the first created man, but has been faithfully handed down to us through the Patriarchs and Prophets of the Jewish Church, and the Apostles and their successors of the Christian Church. We know that the poems of Homer were not originally written. They were correctly handed down to posterity for many generations by tradition. Masonry has been preserved and is still taught in the same way. We know that Christ Himself never wrote anything — except in the sand. The winds came and blew that away, but the spoken words were remembered and have come down to us. The Christian Church existed long before the Gospels and Epistles were written. Instead of the Bible proving the Church, it is the Church that proves the Bible.

As a lawyer I could come to but one conclusion. As there must be an end to litigation, so there must be an end to controversy. The decisions of our

Supreme Court are final (infallible). It is a legal fiction that "the King can do no wrong." And yet, this fiction in law, is the expression of a necessary fact. Religious controversy, all questions relating to faith and morals, when decided by the Pope, are final, and must be accepted as infallible. When I want to know what the common law of the land is I go to the decisions of the Courts. In like manner, when I want to know what the Christian religion is, I must go to the reports of the Councils of the Catholic Church and to the decisions of the Popes. In its entirety it is not to be found any where else.

There remained for me then, but one way to solve the question of Christian unity, and that was by uniting myself with the Catholic Church. I was not changing my religion, I was changing the place where I went to church. It was a question of jurisdiction rather than religion which confronted me, and I settled it by submission, as all must do who love Christianity more than they do themselves.

There were ethical reasons also why I became a Catholic. From pulpit and platform I had heard much of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man. I was much inclined to the conviction that the best type of manhood was to be found outside of the Church. A wider experience however has taught me differently. For a realization of that dream I searched diligently and

conscientiously through Oddfellowship, Masonry, Unitarianism, and kindred ethical societies and fraternal organizations. But the God of all these was not our Father. He was a mere abstraction, a first cause, an over-soul, a law, not a lawgiver. He was the subject of much rhetoric, the object of little love, and worship. He was not a Being who hears and answers prayers, Who pities and forgives sinners, Who makes laws and commands obedience. As for the Brotherhood of Man, let those who have searched for it through all the secret, benevolent societies and fraternal organizations, tell me if they have been more successful than I in finding it. It was a brotherhood with the black man and the yellow man left out, a brotherhood in which even the foreign man was not welcome. I did not find it until I searched for it in the Catholic Church. It is not perfect even there, but I found a brotherhood kneeling side by side on the same hard floor. There, I found all sorts and conditions of men, all colors, all nations, blended by a common faith into a universal brotherhood, a Catholic Church. There all tongues confess "One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism," and in a universal language confess God's Holy Name.

Socialism, as an economic system, and altruism as its religious counterpart, were also very attractive to me. I was longing for the time to come when the only competition among men might be, "who best can serve his fellow-man." My own

practical attempts in this direction, and those of others which came under my observation were failures. They were rendered impossible and impracticable by the selfishness of the very men intended to be benefited thereby. They failed because they were not built upon the Rock. We who composed them and promoted them were firmly convinced that the Church was no longer the helper and defender of the poor, but we were mistaken. Why should a labor organization hate the Church that teaches it is a mortal sin to keep back the wage of the poor? Why should any man object to the wholesome discipline that requires confession and restitution for sin? Why should the Socialist reject the only religion on earth that teaches truly the equality and fraternity of mankind? Why reject the Son of God Who called Himself our Elder Brother and our Friend, and Who was crucified for us. "Greater love hath no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friends."

To all these societies with which I have affiliated, I am indebted for grains of truth in bushels of chaff. They excited me to press on until the whole truth was found. When I found it in the Catholic Church, I discovered, to my astonishment, that there is not a truth nor a semblance of truth in any of these societies that has not been better taught and practised by her for nearly 2,000 years.

In this connection I am also bound to acknowl-

edge the obligations I am under to well known friends — the A. P. A.'s. Long before I had thought of becoming a Catholic, these sticklers for truth declared I was one and had been seen communing at the altar rail. The more I denied it, the louder the cock crew. At length it occurred to me that a church which excited the hostility of such men must be a very good church, and that her doctrine must be true if no weapons better than forgery and perjury could be brought against them. Thus it has always happened to me. I am indebted to both my friends and enemies. Both have helped to bring me into the Catholic Church. The friends led, the enemies drove, and so I got there sooner than I otherwise would.

I must also admit my obligations to the politicians and the parties. Without them, and my experience in public office, I could not give all the reasons why I became a Catholic. I had studied them all closely; tried always to vote for the best men regardless of their party or affiliations. I believed the world was to be reformed by a new party, to grow out of the old. I will not say that reform within the party is impossible, because it is human; but I will say that reform within the Church is not only possible, but obligatory because it is divine. Experience taught me also that the new party man was just as hungry for office as the old one, if not more so, because longer from the crib. He was not a bit more honest and not so

well qualified. My experience as a trustee of the public schools also drew me nearer to the Catholic Church. It was while engaged in the discharge of that public duty that I became convinced that the reform of all reforms must consist not so much in organizing new parties as in seeking to train a better man. Good laws do no good when put in the hands of bad men to execute. Bad laws are shorn of their badness when put in the hands of good men to enforce. From this, the next step was not difficult. The Church, not the party, must train this man.

When finally I presented myself a stranger, to good Bishop Montgomery and told him I wanted to become a Catholic, I was already convinced and only needed instruction and the Sacraments of the Church.

Just as I was without one plea, I faced about like the Prodiga Son. My belly was filled with the husks of free thought and reform nostrums. I longed for a place where I could stand and feel the ground solid beneath me. I started back, stopped again for a while at the dear old Half-Way House, the Protestant Episcopal Church, and then on again until I reached my Father's House. Its portals opened and I became a Catholic. May God give me the grace here to remain steadfast and immovable, and to manfully fight under His banner, the Cross, for Catholic Faith and Christian Unity unto my life's end.

MOSES HALE DOUGLASS, ESQ.,

CHARLESTOWN, NEW HAMPSHIRE.

I became a Catholic because the teaching unity of the Church of Rome shows that it is the Church of God and that all its teachings are true.

At the time of my conversion I was preparing for the ministry of the Protestant Episcopal Church, with no attention to Rome except that which arose in the ordinary course of study, church-going and reading, all exclusively Anglican. I was firmly convinced that the High-Church teaching about the Blessed Sacrament and the sacramental nature of the priesthood were essential in perpetuating and applying our Lord's purpose toward mankind.

What led to the transition in me, which did not occur in my associates who were of the same mind, is hard to describe well. But next after the Goodness of God, helping my goodwill, I attribute it to my sense of the responsibility that was to rest on me as a teacher. In a word, I felt that those to whom I might minister had a right to demand that I teach only such doctrines as the Episcopal Church avowed. Living or preaching my convictions about the Blessed Sacrament and priesthood would require me to show explicit utterances of this Church that the Blessed Sacrament was indeed the

Body and Blood of Jesus, and the priesthood sacramental; or there would be no obligation to accept my teachings. I proposed to leave no room to reject them, not doubting that I should easily find explicit statements of what I professed as the true teachings of the Episcopal Church.

However that may be argumentatively, there came a time as I looked for authorization of Catholic teachings by the Episcopal Church, when I felt it unreasonable to look further. Many great and good men could be quoted in their favor; but they were teaching their Church instead of being taught by it. And the significance of it suddenly burst upon me.

My grateful sense of duty and trust in the Episcopal Church went in a twinkling. Its consciousness of fallibility left me without convincing evidence not only about sacramental orders, and the presence of our Lord in the Holy Eucharist, but also about the value of its testimony to the difficult and amazing stories of our Lord's birth and life; His death and resurrection. I could no longer hold them intact without a surer witness.

I did not come out of a storm into a calm. I had experienced no storm. My confidence in the Episcopal Church had prevented it. There was but a moment when I felt overwhelmed. In the Providence of God all that I had heard and read about the unity of the Apostolic See came back to me, in spite of my life-long opposition to it. It is a pal-

pable fact, from which, not to which, we reason. As I lost confidence in the Episcopal Church I saw the teaching unity of the Church of God visibly appearing to all men. It was sufficient alone to prove the miraculous origin and continuance of Christian teaching; and it accomplished in me the very purpose for which it had been given and sustained.

SUSAN L. EMERY,

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS.

Author of "The Inner Life of the Soul," etc., and on the Editoral staff of the *Sacred Heart Review* of Boston Mass., since 1891.

The roads that lead souls into the Catholic Church are many and various. Rome rhymes with home, and indeed all roads lead there. Diverse influences wrought upon my own experience; but perhaps those that I shall indicate to-day, in this brief sketch, will sufficiently show, for the purpose of this book, the process that led to the final result.

I was brought up in a very religious atmosphere. Though my father came of Unitarian and my mother of Congregationalist parentage, they began to attend Episcopalian services soon after my birth, although they were not confirmed until I was about ten years old. I can remember the occasion. We had been living for a short time in Rhode Island. Soon after our return to Dorchester, now a part of Boston, a clergyman came to our parish, the late Rev. William H. Mills, to whose influence we owed very much. My first solid ideas of what was then accounted good and rather High Churchmanship came, so far as I remember, from him; and there was, in his life and teaching, as I now look back upon it, a certain earnest, sin-

cere, and devout reasonableness that was very helpful for my ardent young soul, which, however, needed more special treatment than it received at that time.

In 1872 I was living in New York, engaged in editorial work on the *Young Christian Soldier*, a periodical still connected with the Episcopalian Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society. Dr. Twing was then the Domestic General Secretary; he took me to the General Convention of the Episcopal Church held in Baltimore in 1872. I had been growing more and more "High Church"; and I can remember that I went, in the early mornings, to the very advanced Church of Mount Calvary, and that once, on coming back to my boarding place, I kissed my hand in my fervor, thinking that perhaps the real body of our Lord Jesus Christ had lain on my palm that day. But the debates at the Convention, and my reading, and the life around me, showed me plainly the varying schools of thought and practice among Episcopalians, clergy and laity alike. At last the questions began to press upon me: "Where was the real truth? What was I to believe? Where was I to go?"

I had a dear friend, Julia Scammon, an earnest Catholic, who said to me: "Susie, I am going to do all I can to make you a Catholic." But, oddly enough, circumstances swept us apart for awhile; and, when we met again, I was indeed a Catholic.

I know that her sister Margaret, Mrs. Lockwood, sent my name to the Apostleship of Prayer.

The Three Branch theory held possession of my soul. I felt that I could willingly die for the sake of seeing the "Greek, Roman and Anglican branches," as I called them, made "one again." I maintained that Julia Scammon should remain in the "Church of her Baptism" and I in the "Church of my Baptism"; and then we should do all that we could to bring about that desired "reunion," quite unaware that there can be but one true Baptism, and that a person who has been, surely, validly baptized is not "baptized over again," as too many people mistakenly suppose. I am, however, like Father Faber, thankful and glad that I was "conditionally baptized," when I was received into the Catholic Church at my conversion.

In the Spring of 1874, I told Dr. Twing that I could no longer edit the *Young Christian Soldier*, because my mind was in such a state of doubt that it did not seem to me right to try to teach the children. I remember that he said: "If you come back to it ten years from now, the place is ready for you."

I went for five months to the seashore; and I think the loveliness of nature and the quiet surroundings helped and strengthened me physically; but the mental and spiritual torture continued. If I could only see my way clearly! If I could only see what path to pursue! Was I to go to Rome,

or to the Greek Church; or was I to remain where I was? What possible thing could there be, to make me leave my own people, break the happy union in which my parents knelt with their nine children at the chancel rail, cause grief and pain in my home-circle? If I stayed where I was, there were those who taught the Real Presence, Confession, and the like. Why, then, should I go away? and what path was any more clear to my straining eyes? If I could only see! If my will-power would only act!

On Christmas Eve I was walking along Boston Common, and I said my first real prayer to the Blessed Virgin. I had been reading the controversy between Newman and Pusey on that subject.

"Mother of God," I cried, "make me will to do God's will!"

The answer came. On Christmas Day I was in great distress, but I forced myself to go to Communion. Then the Feast of the Epiphany, the feast of light and of manifestation, arrived. There was, in our house, a volume of sermons by the great Irish Dominican, Father Thomas Burke, belonging to one of those Irish maidens who have done so much towards spreading the Faith in New England. I opened the book. Whether the day was the exact feast of the Epiphany, or whether it was in the Octave or season, I do not now recall; but, in that time of illumination of the Gentiles, I looked down upon the page, and distinctly before

me lay the words that I had read and heard unnumbered times before, (I tell it as I recall it after many years are fled), Our Divine Lord's own words spoken to His chosen and great Apostle:

"Thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven."

As I say, I had read and heard these words unnumbered times already, in my own quiet room, and at family prayers, and in church. I had never once realized, however, that the promise to St. Peter in St. Matthew's Gospel, xvi, 18, 19, was far and away in importance beyond that given to all the Apostles in St. John's Gospel, xx, 22, 23: *"Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained."* To-day, however, I saw printed on the same page of Father Burke's sermon containing the promise to Peter, these words from St. Ambrose:

"SHOW ME PETER, AND I WILL SHOW YOU THE CHURCH."

And then my cry for help to the Blessed Virgin was manifestly answered; for then I knew, and then I willed God's will.

As clearly as I see now before me the page on

which I write — as absolutely as I know that two and two make four — I saw and I knew that the Church of which the Pope, the successor of Peter, was the visible head, was the one true Church of God; I saw that therein Peter had the supreme prerogative; and that where he was, my place was. No fear came over me, either to make me take the step, or not to take it, into that Church that loomed magnificently now before my gaze. I saw the truth, and the truth had made me free.

A wave of such immense spiritual joy overwhelmed my soul that I could not speak at once of the treasure that I had won; I had to hug it to my heart a day or two, before I could speak of it. I had gone through fire and water, and God had brought me out into a wealthy place.

I was received into the Church on St. Joseph's Day, March 19, 1875, by the Rev. Edward Hooker Welch, S. J., himself a convert, in the Church of the Immaculate Conception, Boston, Mass.

So plain, so vivid, so logical, so certain, was it all to me, that I thought I had only to tell my dear ones of it and they would see it as I saw. But no. Faith is a gift of God. A man may reason, and read, and argue; and yet he may not see the truth. For myself, I can only say that whereas I was blind, now I see. Darkness became brightness, in the light of the Infallible Church. Questions about Transubstantiation, Anglican Orders, Indulgences, troubled me not at all. Peter spoke,

and God spoke through Peter. The one true God must have His one true Church.

Thirty-three years have passed since this great grace came to me; and through all these years, the majestic form of God's one true Church has stood clearly before me, the Church as He promised it, one, indivisible, infallible, against which the gates of hell never have prevailed, and never shall prevail.

THE VERY REV. HIRAM FRANCIS FAIRBANKS,

MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN.

Rector of St. Patrick's Church.

I am a descendant of the Puritans for whom I have a sincere admiration and esteem, not for their distinctive religious principles, but for their honest, sturdy and independent characteristics.

For a century before my Puritan ancestors came to these American shores their fathers had been Churchmen of the Anglican type.

In this story of my conversion I shall not write an essay on why I am a Catholic, with its logical premises and conclusion, and with its reasons for my position such as I should now write after many years of study and experience in the Catholic Church and its priesthood. I shall try rather to remember the course of my mind and the workings of divine grace at the time when God was leading me on, when sometimes I followed Him willingly and sometimes hesitated or refused to follow Him. While my journey in the main was onward and upward, sometimes I retraced my steps and sometimes did not know where I was wandering. Such a course was not always logical, and was not always

along the highway which leads directly to the City of God.

I was born in Leon, Cattaraugus county, New York, on the twenty-fifth day of May 1845. My parents were members of one of the sects of extreme evangelical Protestantism, of which my father was a minister. When I was eight years of age, I moved with my parents to Wisconsin. I was brought up with the idea that before I became a real Christian I must be "converted." I remember being present on one occasion at the Lord's Supper and hearing the words of the minister: "The body of our Lord Jesus Christ" etc., and having no doubt that he meant what he said I had a longing desire to go forward and receive communion. How I envied a boy a little older than myself who had that happy privilege! It was perhaps two years afterwards when one day I was walking with my father and thinking over what I had just heard in the church that I could no longer control my ardent desire to be the friend and loved one of Christ. I stopped in the middle of the way and clasping my father's arm burst into tears, and sobbing as if my heart would break, cried out in the midst of my grief: "Father, I want to be a Christian!" Because I did not know any better way God came down to my childish simplicity and must have answered me. He who walked along the roads of Galilee consoling the

sorrowful and forgiving the sinful, met me on the highway and brought to my soul not alone peace but great happiness. It was on a Sunday and I well remember how during the remainder of the day I wandered through the fields and woods communing with God. O, how brightly the sun shone, how sweetly the birds sung, how joyfully God revealed Himself in the leaves, the flowers, the trees, in nature everywhere; O, how joyfully my soul sung His praises!

Soon after my fifteenth birthday, I entered a Protestant college. I had never before been away from home, and although my new surroundings were interesting, and naturally attractive to a young student I was very lonesome and homesick. Whenever I have been compelled to leave home, homesickness has always been one of the afflictions of my life, and was destined to make the cross which afterwards I had to take up and bear a very painful one.

At this time I had never seen a Catholic priest, knowing him to be such. I think I had been in college less than a month when I saw in a newspaper that Father D—— would celebrate Mass in the new church of St. Mary, and in the afternoon would hold a Vesper service. I did not see the notice in time to attend Mass, but I did go to Vespers and Benediction.

I can console myself with the thought that I embraced the first opportunity that I ever had of

attending a service of the Catholic Church. To my eyes the church was strange and attractive. The priest, who was the new pastor, preached a controversial sermon dealing with the claims and divine mission of the Church. Here at the very beginning of my student life my mind and conscience were disturbed. All that night I dreamed about the sermon and what the priest had said. I had entered on a spiritual struggle which was to continue for four years, lasting through my entire college course, and which became to me a life and death struggle, during which time I should go over the whole range of controversy, and should advance from the lower levels of so-called evangelical Protestantism up to the highest levels of the Anglican position, which should end just before I was nineteen years of age in my reception into the great Church which acknowledges the Bishop of Rome to be the Vicar of Jesus Christ on earth. I had entered on a spiritual journey through the wilderness which God in his great goodness had shortened to four years instead of forty; and just before its end he gave me a vision of the promised land from the heights of Nebo. But I lingered there satisfied with the scene that lay before my eyes and hesitated for a time before I resolved to cross the Jordan and find rest and happiness at the end of my weary journey.

The contest had begun in my soul between God's grace and truth and the prejudices of birth and

early education and surroundings. While my inclinations and disposition had led me so early in my life to investigate the teachings of the Catholic Church I had considerable bigotry in my make-up. I was not prejudiced against persons on account of language, race or religion, but on the contrary felt that diversities in such matters made the world more picturesque and life more interesting. But unconsciously to myself error and the bigotry of error even at that early age had become a part of my nature.

To know and understand this proposition it is necessary to have some knowledge of a person's ancestors. As I said at the beginning of this narrative my ancestors were Puritans. Their blood had flowed down through the veins and hearts of nine generations into my veins and heart. Their thoughts, prejudices and characteristics had permeated the brains and wills of a class and race of men among the most determined and tenacious that the world has ever known. Therefore to know me at that time it is necessary to speak of my New England ancestors. Among my ancestors on my father's side were such men as Henry Adams of Braintree, the ancestor of two of our Presidents, John Adams, and John Quincy Adams; John Coolidge of Watertown, who is the ancestor of the present great grandchildren of Thomas Jefferson, third President of the United States, through Martha Jefferson, daughter of

Thomas Jefferson; Jonathan Fairbanks, who built the old house at Dedham in 1636 which is believed to be the oldest occupied dwelling house within the limits of our country, and the ancestor of Vice President Fairbanks. Capt. George Fairbanks, son of Jonathan, moved farther into the wilderness. His son and grandson were physicians, father and grandfather of Lieutenant Joshua Fairbanks, a lieutenant of the Minute Men who marched to Boston on that eventful day, April 19th, 1775. He married a cousin of John and Samuel Adams. It is from this patriotic couple that the writer of this narrative is descended. These pioneers of the new world married and intermarried until I can count among my ancestors the well-known families of Ellis, Phillips, Newton, Livermore, Geary, Sheffield, Lovel, Bailey, the Scotchman William Douglas, ancestor of the late Stephen A. Douglas; the French Huguenot Roger Amidoun and others. On my mother's side I number among my forefathers the names of James Franklin, Thomas Pratt, and Rev. George Phillips, the Puritan minister of Watertown. These men were not only Puritans, but they were the hardy pioneers of the wilderness, and among the founders of this great Western Republic. They have impressed their character on their descendants. We are in no sense a race of spineless men and have never lacked the courage of our convictions, and if necessary we can and will make sacrifices for them.

But at the same time we are the heirs of heretical bigotry, which has been hastening during the last half century into irreligion by means of a godless public school system. An Adams woman, who also has Fairbanks' blood in her veins, once wrote to me from Boston: "What would Jonathan Fairbanks or Henry Adams have said to a Catholic priest as a descendant? I am wondering if it is not the old Puritan blood which gave you the courage to stand for what seemed right to you, even as those far-off ancestors dared to take their stand!" To this I must answer with every convert. "By the grace of God, I am what I am," but to me the old Puritan blood was no drawback.

Before I entered college I had read almost everything that came in my way, even many of my father's religious and controversial works. I had read the entire Bible, having been paid by my father for doing so, and had committed to memory a good portion of the four Gospels through a spirit of rivalry and ambition in Sunday-schools. Outside of the Scriptures I cannot judge what influence my reading had exerted on my religious sentiments. I know that it had tended to make me love my country, and nature, and to inspire me with a romantic love for the deeds and grandeur of the ancient Roman empire. The Bible had exerted over me a strangely fascinating influence, and I often wondered how it was possible that Christianity, so far as I knew it, had lost so much that was beauti-

ful and inspiring, and had fallen so far below what seemed to be divine in the Old Testament religion. In a word the religion of the old Law had clearly prefigured to me an ideal, and had prepared my mind for its glorious realization in the Catholic Church. And I saw nothing in the New Testament which contradicted it.

But the commentators, both in my father's library and elsewhere, had exerted and for several years continued to exert a distinctly vicious influence. With great pleasure I read and re-read the Book of Revelation. From every point of view it attracted me. But the commentators had fastened on my mind the nightmare of doubt; that the Pope might be Antichrist, the scarlet woman, and the beast with seven heads and ten horns which had taken the place of the dragon, the pagan Roman empire. Parents sometimes frighten children with stories of hobgoblins so that even when the child becomes a man and learns the truth — to hear these stories repeated will again make his flesh creep. In like manner the fiction of a papal Antichrist conjured up by the crazy imaginations of commentators will cling to a man long after his reason has taught him better. Cardinal Newman acknowledges this to have been true in his own case. What wonder then that it should haunt the imagination of one groping in the dark where the light of divine truth has only begun to glimmer. In some cases even objects and customs which

bring to the minds of Catholics only piety and devotion, to one reared in prejudice against them they are liable to produce the very opposite effect, and for some time after one is convinced of their value and beneficial influence a mingled feeling of devotion and disquietude will at times come into the mind. For example, almost up to the time that I became a Catholic the image of the crucifix would sometimes suggest to me the feeling that devotion to it might perhaps partake of idolatry. A short time afterwards the sight of that sacred image would fill my soul with the holy thought and sweet love of the Crucified.

A struggle was taking place in my soul between God's grace and the powers of evil. Which should be the victor? Should heaven or hell triumph?

I shall now try to remember and record some of the events in the history of my conversion.

Very early in my college course I became acquainted with all the clergymen of the city including the Episcopalian rector and Catholic priest. There were some changes in their ranks during the four years I was there. I rarely visited any of them in their own homes with the exception of the rector and the priest.

The first controversial book, from the Catholic point of view, that came into my hands was the "Trials of a Mind" by Dr. Ives, who had formerly been the Protestant bishop, of North Caro-

lina. His position had been so much farther advanced than mine that I could not sympathize with it at that time, and so it did not interest me sufficiently to finish reading it. The next book which I found in the library of one of our college societies was the "Hughes and Breckenridge Controversy." Although it was a rather extensive work I read it to the end with intense interest, and with the conclusion that Father, afterwards Archbishop Hughes had the best of the argument. From that time on I read books on all sides of the question, some of them loaned to me by the priest and others by the rector; and when I was at home during vacations I again took up my father's controversial works on such subjects as Apostolical succession, the Rule of Faith, Baptismal Regeneration, and many others of a similar nature, with the curious result that through them I advanced almost farther on the way toward the end of my journey than through many of the books on the Catholic side. There may have been several reasons for this; I had more time to read them and think out the conclusions for myself, and the objections of their opponents which they presented in a weak way I found, nevertheless, to be stronger than their answers.

I did not wish to become a Catholic. The Catholic Church seemed to me to be a foreign church with foreign sympathies, and I realized that I should feel much more at home with my own

kindred and people than with those whose customs and characteristics were then strange and alien to me.

Before I began my college course I desired to enter the army or navy, but my father, being a man of peace, strenuously objected to it. When I entered college I had determined to become a lawyer, for I saw that the highest places and honors in state and nation were open to members of that profession. It was not long however when God's will seemed to manifest itself in me that I was called to dedicate myself to His special service. I held back for some time and experienced a severe struggle before I finally concluded to abandon ambition and make the sacrifice of becoming a minister of Christ. To make the sacrifice as complete as possible I decided to become a foreign missionary and to give up my life to the work in the East Indies. My father did not like the idea of separation, but my mother, ever generous when the service of God was the object, readily acquiesced, the more so because I had made up my mind never to marry, that I might give myself, more unreservedly to the service of Christ. Even after I had become a Catholic I did not give up the idea of entering on missionary work in India.

I cannot remember all the successive steps in the history of my conversion. I know that before I was eighteen years of age I believed, at least ten-

tatively, most of the doctrines of the Catholic Church.

Almost at the beginning of my college course I had learned to make the Sign of the Cross and used it in all my private devotions, having become convinced of its primitive Christian use from a Protestant church history in my father's library. I believed in the necessity of Apostolic succession for the validity of Holy Orders, in Baptismal Regeneration, and in the Real Presence of Christ in the Holy Eucharist. I usually attended religious services three times each Sunday, dividing my attendance with the Baptists, Methodists, Congregationalists, Episcopalians and Catholics. At one time the Episcopalian services were very attractive to me. There was a dignity and simplicity in their ritual that I liked, and the quaint and effective phrasing of simple but strong English captivated my heart. I can readily imagine what a sacrifice it must have been for many of the converts who for two score years or more had been charmed and consoled by it to give it up for an unaccustomed liturgy in a strange tongue. They would never have made the sacrifice were it not for the conviction that they were giving up a nonessential but attractive form with its sacred associations, for the essential reality; a dear, quaint and hallowed, but empty casket, for another of strange pattern, newer in their eyes, but older and once the sacred treasure of their Fathers,

which they know holds the jewels of Christ's bounty and the pearl of great price.

About a year or more before I took the final step, a student in theology in a Catholic seminary, a convert, suggested to me that I should take up one distinctive Catholic doctrine at a time and make all the objections I could muster against it, and he would write me an answer. I accepted the suggestion and at once put it into execution. Although in some sense it proved satisfactory it was not continued after the first effort. It did not reach the heart of the difficulty. I wrote him a long letter containing arguments against Transubstantiation. It was some time before I received an answer, but when it came it was a fairly good one. One thing in his letter rather surprised and hurt me; he indicated that I must have had help in my communication. I knew no one who could have helped me. I do not believe there was any one within reach of me who could have presented the arguments and objections as I had done. The subject was so vital to me for time and eternity that I had studied, and grasped, and understood it, as I could under no other circumstances. My well-being in this world and in the world to come was at stake and depended on the final solution of these questions. I found out afterwards, when I was a student in the same seminary, the reason of his suggestion. He found my objections so difficult to refute that he

himself had to go to the professor of theology to help him out in his answer.

I shall now point out what in reality accomplished more lasting results. As I have previously said, the conflict had become to me a life and death struggle. I plainly saw that the salvation of my soul depended on the outcome. I did not want to lose my soul, and I did not want to become a Catholic. So I read the works of some of the most learned and skillful Protestant writers I could find, and culled what seemed to me their most unanswerable objections to Catholic doctrines. In every case when I called on the local priest and proposed the objection he merely explained the particular doctrine at issue and the objection entirely disappeared. There was no need of controversy. The doctrine itself as taught by the Church was its own best defender. I soon came to learn that in most cases the objection to a Catholic doctrine is a man of straw who needs no knock; place him on his feet and he will fall of himself. Which is another way of saying that many of the supposed Catholic doctrines denied by Protestants were never taught by the Church. The name is often correct but it does not mean what they think it does.

Father D—— was not a learned theologian. On the contrary his knowledge was rather superficial, but he was quick and apt in wit and text. I could give a hundred instances, but I will illustrate

by one example his quickness of irony against some foolish opinions of certain non-Catholics. A few years after I became a priest he one day came suddenly into the room where he found me reading my breviary. He instantly raised his hands in mock horror and exclaimed: "The country is in danger; a Yankee saying his breviary!" He himself was a Belgian.

All this time that I was confusing my brain trying to weigh arguments for and against the various different doctrines of the Church I was like one floundering in quicksands. By the time I was eighteen years of age I had come to believe all the doctrines of the Catholic faith as well as one is able to believe them without the divine teaching authority of the Church. I already understood the nature and necessity of religion, the necessity and existence of divine revelation, and the necessity of knowing the truths of divine revelation with certainty. But the question yet remained to be brought home to me: "Where shall I find the divine teaching authority commissioned by Jesus Christ the Incarnate Word to teach all the truths of His revelation with infallible certainty?" More than a year before I became a Catholic I had taken up my last position, that the Church was infallible when speaking through a General Council which was such in fact, but not through a so-called general council which represented only a part of divided Christendom.

I again read "Trials of a Mind," by Dr. Ives, and now I understood it. I found that although I was yet young, barely eighteen, I had already suffered his trials, had taken up all his positions except the final one, and with a heavy heart had abandoned them. It was now forced on me by the logic of necessity that an infallible Church in order to fulfill its divine mission among men must be an ever-living teacher whose infallible voice should not be dependent on a divided Christendom. Nowhere else could such an ever-living teacher be found except in the Apostolic See of Peter.

I now decided that I would become a Catholic, but would delay the final step until I was twenty-one years of age, which would be nearly three years from that time. About two months before I was nineteen I went to hear a lecture by a celebrated Jesuit missionary. The lecture was not in the strict sense controversial, but dwelt rather on the great danger of delay in corresponding with God's grace. After the lecture I called on the priest, who very soon discovered the state of my mind and invited me to his room. After a serious conversation he told me that he was to leave the next forenoon and that if I wished him to baptize me early in the morning I might kneel down at once and make my confession. I hesitated for a moment and then knelt down. It was probably as good a confession as I ever made. Early the next morning I received conditional baptism. My godfather

was the convert student whom I have already mentioned, who had been ordained a priest some six months before. I took for my patron saint St. Francis Xavier, for whom for some time I had great admiration and considerable devotion. A few days after I received my first Communion. At last I had returned to the religion of my forefathers. I have since learned that a number of my kinsmen with the name of Fairebanke, were priests of the Church just before the time of the so-called Reformation. I have again taken up the line that was broken for nearly four hundred years.

I did not at once make known publicly that I had become a Catholic although for months it had been suspected by my professors and others that I was liable to become one at any time. I wished to be the first to tell my parents of the step which I had taken. On arriving home I broke the news first to my mother and then to my father. It turned our home into a house of mourning and desolation. My father was at first stunned, and then completely overcome. I thought he could not survive the blow. For hours his tears and half suppressed cries were heart-rendering. My mother wept in silence. It would have been easier for me to die a martyr's death than to suffer all this. How I longed for persecution that would bind me to the martyr's stake. Anything was to be preferred to seeing my parents' great grief. But in a few days

the intenser fires of grief had burned themselves out.

A few weeks more and I must leave my home to study for the priesthood. Here was a new trial. My father told me that if I left home for that purpose I must never return, his house could never again be my home, and he never wanted to see me or hear from me. But just before my departure he came to me and gave me to understand that a father's heart is oftener more tender than his words. He wanted me back as often as I could come home, and afterwards I spent all my vacations at home. Two years before my mother died she became a Catholic, and I had the privilege of giving her the Last Sacraments. My father continued to the end in Protestantism. I hope he was in good faith, for he was an honest man and I never even once heard him say anything against the Catholic Church in his sermons.

One beautiful morning I went forth with a desolate heart from my father's house, leaving a sorrow-stricken household behind me. I had obeyed the Voice of God saying to me: "Go forth out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and out of thy father's house and come into the land which I shall shew thee." I went forth and came into a strange country, but "it was the promised land of the New Testament, the kingdom of God on earth." I have now been a priest for more than forty years, and

O, how my heart goes back to those "who are not of this fold!" In these forty years my hopes and expectations for the progress of the Church in this land in one sense have not been realized. Perhaps God is preparing the soil for a rich harvest. It is my own personal belief that we should make more of that great movement which in our time goes on under the name of "Corporate Reunion." In my later life far more than in former years my heart and prayers are with it. It promises more than any other movement, and its final success means the unity of Christendom and the conversion of the pagan world, when "the kingdom of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord and His Christ." Personally, as in the past so now only one course would be open to me, to make at once my individual submission to the successor of St. Peter. And when others take this course I rejoice with the Angels in heaven. But my heartfelt sympathy is with those Anglicans who seek to be again united with Rome by means of "Corporate Reunion." There can be no brighter hopes of success than with the great Anglican body which once belonged to the Holy See as one of its most faithful adherents, and which to-day contains such a large number of Catholic-minded men and women whose strong and earnest desire is to return to that ancient unity with which nearly a thousand years of their own most sacred associations and glorious history are interwoven.

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"How did I come to be a Catholic?" A question not to be answered in a word or without tracing somewhat at length one's religious training and life previous to that event.

Born of orthodox Congregational parents, in old Massachusetts, a descendant in direct line of the famous Mather family —"Puritan of the Puritans," it came to pass that at the age of fifteen or sixteen I found myself a member of the Presbyterian Church in the City of Chicago, by "Profession of Faith."

There was no marked experience accompanied with a violent transformation of nature — as in some instances. On the contrary, a gradual development of earlier instruction culminating in the purpose to be a Christian and to lead a life in harmony therewith. I had been baptized in infancy, but no account was taken of that, as having anything to do with "joining the church" at the age indicated.

The death of my father when I was but seventeen altered the course of my life for a time — but

at nineteen, with the fixed purpose to enter the ministry I went to the University of Michigan, from which institution I graduated four years later.

What of my religious tendencies and practices during that time? From a narrow view that it was sinful to attend any but a Presbyterian Church to one that was broad enough to go to the service of any denomination — save the Catholic which was simply not taken into the reckoning at all — and to make the students' Y. M. C. A. my religious home. The church of early youth was not given up, only pushed gradually into a place where it shared with others my time and efforts. The end of the college career found me less sectarian but more religious. Then came a year of teaching with no privileges of my own denomination; succeeded by three years in the Union Theological Seminary in New York City, graduating in 1875; soon after becoming an ordained Presbyterian Minister.

Calvinistic Theology was, at times, a hard dose to swallow. There were various discussions amongst us, and once, I landed square in Pantheism, from which I rescued myself by asserting my belief in a Personal God, but on the whole I accepted the system, only, however, in its more liberal interpretations.

For about twelve years I labored faithfully as a Presbyterian minister, under quite unusual outward conditions — meanwhile battling inwardly over the

claims of "Episcopacy" versus "Presbyterianism."

This mental conflict centered in and about Baptism and its significance. Especially the words of Christ to Nicodemus: "The Forgiveness of Sins" as voiced in His words to his Apostles: the "Laying on of Hands" — as one of the foundation doctrines of the Faith: the "Sacrament of the Lord's Supper" — as a necessary means of Grace: the doctrines of Election — according to the teaching of Calvin — necessarily leading to Fatalism: and the question of "Apostolic Succession" in the Ministry, especially associated with the "Bishop" as a superior officer in the Church: the source of authority for the lower orders. The value of a Prayer Book in worship also received careful attention.

After much study, balancing of probabilities, and prayer; but not much discussion with others, it all ended in my entering the ministry of the Protestant Episcopal Church; where I continued my work for some seventeen years.

The course of thought that led me at last to renounce that faith is somewhat as follows: I had not been long a regularly established Rector, in a fine parish, when there appeared to my mind, quite unlooked for, a gap in the system of Church polity in which I was then a minister. This startled me. There was something missing; what was it? I could not then say. Later I came to understand that it was the lack of practical Apostolical author-

ity. Why must there be this continual dependence upon the feelings and prejudices of the congregation instead of that speaking with authority which was befitting the Church of Christ?

Much of the language of the Episcopal Prayer Book had the right sound, especially in all those matters associated with "High Church" and "Low Church" and the actual application of such doctrines as Baptismal Regeneration, the Forgiveness of Sins (with the confessional as its natural out-working) and the Real Presence in the Holy Communion; but the interpretations thereof were ofttimes diametrically opposed to each other. Why should there not be more unanimity of interpretation on such vital matters among both clergy and laity? It is this continual effort to keep the peace, maintain the compromise, and harmonize absolutely contrary positions that wears one out and leads finally to a condition of quasi-content or positive renunciation of the system.

But, in giving up, unto what is one coming? Frankly, much that it is difficult to accept — save after long, careful and prayerful study of the entire question — Is the Pope the successor of St. Peter? Did Christ give to Peter what He did not give to the other Apostles? Has he any successors? The difficulty resolves itself into a simple acceptance or rejection of our Lord's plain words to the First of the Twelve. Does the Priest in the name of Christ forgive the sins of the penitent? Yes! or No!

There is no middle ground. When Christ said, "This is my Body" speaking of the Bread he held in his hand, did He mean just that, or is it to be explained and rationalized away until there is nothing left? Has the Church of Christ at any time fallen into error or failed to teach all that He commanded? If so, then the Holy Ghost has not remained in and with her as Christ promised; the "Gates of hell" *have* prevailed. Our Lord said these should not prevail!

Are there only Two Sacraments? Are we to distinguish between those established directly by Christ and those ordained by His Church, dwelt in and guided by the Holy Ghost?

What of the Blessed Virgin Mary? Here is a great and crucial question — one of the knottiest problems that the Protestant enquirer must solve. It comes down to this: In connection with the Incarnation, absolute purity in the Virgin Mother was required. Whence comes this? Not in the ordinary way certainly. A supernatural method is demanded — this is given in the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin, and in no other. As to the honor offered to her — in and by the Church — next to that given to Our Lord, a careful and quiet weighing of what the Angel Gabriel said — "Hail Mary! full of Grace — blessed art thou among women!" and the statement "Mother of God," in their true relations ought to be, and are, sufficient answer to all questions.

Where is the Church Christ established amidst all the unending variety of names and organizations? There is but one that can make and substantiate such a claim. When, therefore, one arrives at this position, everything resolves itself into a simple matter of obedience thereunto. All the above questions arose for settlement, were considered, put on one side, and taken up again and again. The momentous questions of decision was postponed, the grace of God resisted, at least in part, for fear of the consequences of even the intellectual admission of the logic of the situation, until finally it was this: What must I do to be saved? Is the Roman Catholic Church the Church of Jesus Christ? Believing that it is and that therein alone is found salvation, I asked for admission into it and submitted myself to its Divine Authority.

From that day to this I have been at peace as regards any doubts and difficulties heretofore experienced, and I am, on the other hand more and more impressed with the ever marvelous Grace of God as seen in His Church, appropriated and expressed by that Faith which our Lord himself best described when he said "Except ye be converted and become as little children — ye cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven."

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The place of my nativity was very far from Rome. It seems needful to use that past tense of the verb; because the inhabited places of this planet, however stationary geographically, are wont to vary theologically and pyschologically as to the distances that separate between them, and that venerable City of the Seven Hills. Realizing this fact of the spiritual mobilities of communities otherwise immobile, I could not venture to say that my native New England countryside is now so extremely far from Rome. I am only certain that it was so some sixty years since.

Recalling very early memories, I believe that my first impression of Rome was derived from the school geography, which I learned and took some delight in when perhaps eight or nine years of age. Not that I remember anything that I may then have learned in the way of information about the city

itself. What fixed itself in my mind was that, in the book, mention having been made of the form of government in this or that country, the religion of the people was named; and here I learned the terms Protestant and Roman Catholic. Nothing of the meaning of the terms, as compared, was given either by book or teacher. There was no understanding at all of what it was to be Protestant; nor did I know that the Episcopalians, Baptists of two denominations, Methodists and Quakers of our neighborhood were of the Protestant name. The word was meaningless. The expression Roman Catholic was not quite so. A child of ordinary intelligence studying geography must perceive that with this the city of Rome had somewhat to do: is probably the center of its power and influence. Certain I am that it conveyed as much to me, and thereby became a name of some interest to me; for wholly meaningless names engender no thought or interest; and Protestant was, as I have said, altogether unintelligible to me then.

I recall the substance of conversations between elderly people which I heard in these very early years concerning Catholics, to the effect that they were foreigners who were beginning to have churches in all the cities, wherein strange and spectacular services were held; also that this church and people, being foreign, were a menace to our civil institutions; were even deliberately planning the overthrow of our government. I do not think that

I then identified these Catholics heard of as being in our cities, with that Roman Catholic religion, the bare name of which I had learned in the geography. Indeed, it is improbable that I gave such a matter any thought; for these memories are of a time when I was between seven and nine years old; but the recording of them here is pertinent, as attesting on the part of a child a degree of receptivity to impressions about religion that may be somewhat unusual. It is also to be noted, however, that the first definite impressions I had gained of the Catholic religion were unfavorable. I was prejudiced against it, and that rather decidedly, before having reached the age of ten years.

Prejudice is negative, and seems to imply a positive. At ten years of age what had I in the way of positive religious beliefs and feelings? After the lapse of half a century and more it will not be possible to answer such a question except in a general way; and the answer must be from inference as much as from memory, or more.

I am certain, however, that from still earlier years I believed in and reverenced the Sacred Scriptures; and my understanding of them, in as far as I knew them, was that which pious parents of the Baptist persuasion would inculcate. The night prayers taught us as children had been the Our Father, and "Now I lay me," and the repetition of the words was always done, at least on my part, thoughtfully, reverently, and with more or less of

a deeper feeling. Here, then, was a childhood more or less under the benign influences of unwavering faith and real prayer. The beginning had been made of the life of religion in the soul. Shall one say that already the first steps had been taken on the road to Rome? If the answer were required of me, it would be given in the one word: undoubtedly. For by Rome I mean simply the Christian belief in its completeness. So that he who is environed in the belief of God and His Word, and who in that belief sincerely prays, is on the way to the City of the Fullness of Christian Faith. Not that he will of any necessity traverse the whole distance, or even any very considerable part of it. He may not pass beyond those very earliest stages of the journey. The hindrances are many, and they are mighty.

The House of God, with the ministration thereof, should be the most careful fosterer of every germ of religion in the soul, even of a child. In the village a mile away from our home there was nothing that I ever heard called a House of God, nothing that any one ever spoke of as being a church. There were two neat square buildings painted white, and with green blinds that were usually closed over the square windows that were of small panes of plain glass. A square cupola, or belfry, surmounted the front end of the roof of each building. The interior of each was as plain as its exterior. These buildings were known to us by no other

name but meeting-houses; an expression in which one finds no hint at religion. Meeting-houses are places where people meet; and people met in these for various purposes, according to the occasion; for in the larger of the two the town meetings, and the town elections were always held.

It would not be expected of one reared in such environment that he should arrive at the understanding of a beautiful temple consecrated to God; a place set apart from all secular uses, and revered as sacred to the Divine Name and Presence; a building whose very architecture, and all the particulars of its decoration, should teach religion and inspire it. No thought of any thing different from the meeting-house idea of religious services entered my mind until childhood, and almost boyhood, were passed. I was in attendance upon these regularly, with my parents, until eleven or twelve years of age, but without receiving any item of religious instructions that I can recall, or experiencing the deepening of religious feeling. Yet I have evidence enough that I was even then susceptible, and rather keenly so, to religious impressions.

Once, when I may have been seven or eight years old, my maternal grandmother, who also was a Baptist, took me with her to the Quaker meeting-house one Sunday. I am sure that she seldom went there; though among our nearest neighbors and most esteemed friends were two or three Quaker families. But on this occasion she took me

with her, and I was impressed. The building was more plain than our very plain Baptist meeting-houses. No belfry surmounted the shingled roof, but only a small square chimney. Within there was not even a pulpit; but only a platform at one end, on which were placed two or three of the plainest unvarnished wooden chairs. There was a fair congregation present, and others came later than we, men, women and children; but all were seated in the pews — if they would have so called them — no one appearing on the platform. We sat there in silence for perhaps nearly an hour. Not a word was spoken. Then one and another of the elderly members arose and passed out, and the rest quietly followed, some hand shakings and low neighborly greetings ended the meeting. And this silent meeting of this little Society of Friends deeply impressed me. There were two old men in that congregation, whom all of us school children of the village knew by sight and by name as Quaker preachers; but at the meeting each had his seat with the rest, in the body of the house, and neither of them so much as rose from his seat during the hour, or appeared in any other capacity than that of a speechless meditative worshipper like all the others.

On the walk of a mile home-ward from this meeting my good grandmother must have found me inquisitive, and must also have responded; for, although I have never from that day, now some

sixty years past, attended a meeting of Friends, or been inside one of their meeting-houses or even read a book in relation to them and their doctrines, I have, I think, a fair understanding of them; some part of which, nevertheless, must have been acquired later, and from various unremembered sources. But the fact of my having been seriously impressed by that absolutely silent gathering — that meeting in the name of religion, which from its beginning to its ending was given to individual speechless meditation — that I, a child, should have been strongly and favorably impressed by it, I have been wont to think of in later years as having been perhaps ominous of my predestination to the faith of Rome. Nevertheless there will be here and there a reader who will wish to ask what ground there can possibly be for such a thought. What points of contact are there between tenets of the Society of Friends and of the Roman Catholic Church? The former, it will be said, by proscription of the sacraments, even those of Baptism and Eucharist — solemnly instituted by Christ and strictly enjoined on all his discipleship as essential to their being Christians — seem as if they had deliberately chosen not to be known as Christians at all; and the name of Friends — perfectly evasive, theologically — might be thought further to establish such a theory. At this first glance the Society of Friends will be adjudged as at about the farthest possible remove from the Catholic

Faith. But points of contact between these extremes are manifest. With the Friends, at least as they were seen by me sixty years since, fashions in dress were as completely abjured, and as regularly provided against, as they are in Catholic convents and monasteries. In this and other matters of simplicity in daily life and conversation, they had their counterpart, not in any of the Protestant sects of the time, nor yet in the lives of ordinary Catholics, but in those schools of the higher Christian life, the Catholic religious orders. And that silent religious meeting of so long ago, which so impressed a child, although it happened to be a meditation only, because no one present was "inwardly moved to speak," was a kind of meeting that has its analogue nowhere but in the regular daily meditation of Catholic religious communities.

If, then, it be true that the Society of Friends, while ignoring the very fundamentals of Catholic belief, yet both invites and urges its membership to exercise — one may almost say to ascetic practices — commonly considered to be rather above the aspirations of ordinary Catholics, and thought of as belonging to more advanced stages of Catholic religious experience, who is there who need doubt the existence of a distinctly Catholic tendency as inherent in practical Quakerism? And I have been informed by more than one member of their Society, resident in Philadelphia, that the de-

cline in their numerical strength and influence in that city — once the very Rome of the Friends — has coincided with many conversions from that denomination to the Roman Catholic Church, and many more to the Protestant Episcopal Church. And what I think I may again insist on is, that this is not so exactly an instance of the meeting of extremes; that the Friends' doctrine of a Holy Spirit, whose still small voice is to be listened for within, and their inculcating and practicing of simplicity, silence, meditation, and mental prayer — and all this, upon occasion, in even public worship — are points of contact with even the higher phases of Roman Catholic Christian life and teaching. And so, I may at least be allowed to question whether it was not something like Catholic instinct which so reconciled me, a mere child, to the Friends' silent meeting of an hour's duration.

Let it be granted that there is a certain grace of God that may be termed Catholic instinct; it will also be conceded that human nature is more or less under the sway of impulses that often easily counterpoise and overrule the better instincts.

Among several theses which I should like to take under serious consideration but never shall, there is this one: Whether an intense love of everything in the natural world is favorable rather than unfavorable to the development of religion in the soul. It is a large topic, comprehensive, and with

ramifications; one not here to be entered on save in so far as may be needful to the better understanding of the case in hand.

It is certain that a most unusual degree of susceptibility to the charms of living things, of beauty in the out-of-door world was congenital with me. Before I was old enough to even begin to know myself, I seem to have been known at home and in the neighborhood as a small child singularly given to solitary saunterings all up and down the meadows and pastures, by brookside and along the woodland borders; returning always with some floral trophies from each expedition, and demanding the names of such as I had no names for. Every living thing, whether tree, or bush, or flower, all birds, reptiles and fishes, were things of wonder and of beauty. There was a rapture in the time of the blooming of tulips and daffodils in the gardens, and of the appearing of wood anemones, marsh marigolds and violets by the brookside; another in the time of apple blossoms, and yet another when certain of my school companions carried large bunches of white snowball and red peony to school. There were other days of rapture at the other side of the year, when we gathered nuts in the groves of chestnut and hickory, golden-rod from along the fences, and fringed orchis and dazzling eyebright from the stream banks. The elevated flight of wild waterfowls in angled phalanxes, northward in spring, southward again in

autumn; the sudden coming of the small song birds in the later spring, and of the twittering chimney swifts in early summer, were events of great note in the calender of my early boyhood. Veritable paradises were the bits of mossy cranberry bog when arethusa bloomed in the midst of them, and calopogon along their moist sandy borders; and such again were the huckleberry pastures, with their wealth of berries, their own particular trees and shrubs, and their adorning of purple and of golden autumnal weeds and flowers. And nature, in New England, as elsewhere, had for me its larger and more overpowering aspects. There were the blue, dreamy and almost mythic distant hills, so far away that they could not have tempted the meanderings of a sane small child. Then, from one or two favored elevations not so remote, there were misty glimpses of the ocean ten miles away; there was the frequent display of billowy clouds piled one above another in half-sunny summer skies; also the sublimity of the starry firmament at night. All these things profoundly — I wonder if also religiously — impressed me as a child, and have always done so.

Such slavery of devotion to nature, such ready susceptibility to its thousand fascinations, is an uncommon psychological constituent, and must needs be considered well and seriously in its bearings on the fuller development of one's religious nature. Indeed, that very devotion to nature's

beauties and sublimities is in itself a kind of religion, and in its way powerful. Are we not even told in a thousand books and dissertations that the early ethnic religions, with their priesthoods and ceremonials, were but different phases of the worship of nature? Under Christian enlightenment, then, and with certain fundamentals of revealed religion already active as living principles within, it is still easily supposable that an inordinate passion for nature should stay the progress of the Christian religion toward its conquest of a soul.

It is also possible that the contemplation of nature shall both confirm religious faith already implanted, and inspire devotion.

I am certain that in my own case this passion for the visible universe and for all things in it great and small, considered along with certain mental traits and æsthetic tastes, the development of which it has fostered, has been in some ways favorable, in others pointedly adverse to my progress Romeward; always understanding by this figure the true Christian Religion.

I shall now name a little book, a children's primer of a certain science, which, when I was six and seven years of age, was my particular delight among all booklets at that time known to me. The title of it was "*Botany for Beginners*," etc., by Mrs. Phelps, better known in her day as Mrs. Lincoln and Mrs. Lincoln-Phelps. The ability to confirm religious belief and enkindle devout feeling

while leading the very young to an acquaintance with the beautiful in the plant world, was possessed by this writer in an eminent degree. On page after page of this primer of science she inculcates the idea that all nature is but one expression of the Divine; another revelation of the God of Sacred Scripture. That the reader may more definitely apprehend the essential religiousness of this children's book of botany, I must cite from it a representative sentence or two. Its first chapter is given to a statement of the advantages of botanical study. Seven reasons are set forth why children should be taught its rudiments. In the last two occur the following expressions: "Botany leads us to love and reverence God. Flowers are presents which our Heavenly Father gives us. It is therefore proper that we should examine and study them. We see that He who made them must be *wiser* and more *powerful* than the greatest of men — for what man could make the least plant? We can imitate flowers in wax and various other ways, but who can give them life?

> None can the life of plant or insect give
> Save God alone —— —— — ——"

Religious instruction and suggestion of this type is plentifully distributed here and there throughout the booklet; the whole thus revealing the author as one of firm faith and sincere piety.

My own intense interest in the booklet was born

of my ardent fondness for plants, and a wish to learn all that I could about them. I am sure I was never tired of reading and re-reading it at intervals until, by the time I was eight or nine years old I had outgrown it, and other books of science had taken its place. But its lessons of religion were effective; so genuinely so, that when in larger boyhood, after this first primer had been laid aside, I anywhere in my botanizings came upon some hitherto unseen beauty of brookside, or bog meadow, or woodland shade, it recalled the thought of God, and was at least momentarily the inspirer of religious feeling. Here, then, out of my beloved book of infantile botany I had rather well learned a lesson in religion which I had not learned, or ever could have learned, by means of the many sermons I had heard in the meeting-houses. But, let the preaching that I heard there be credited with having helped to inculcate more deeply one truth; that, however, as an object lesson rather than an oral one. The only thing in the place which had the appearance of being sacred was the large Bible, resting on a velvet cushion on top of the pulpit. The preacher read his texts from this, then expounded them as excerpts from the Word of God. All this was plain to a child; and he, though unable rationally to follow and understand the expositions, might none the less realize, by the means indicated, a deepening of his impression of the sacredness of Holy Scripture. If I search every

nook of memory, and inspect with care each probable help to my early and firm belief in the Scriptures, it is because I have long felt that such belief is a most important item of Catholic truth. He who holds it has made at least a good day's march toward Rome. The book is not Protestant but Roman Catholic, and that from its beginning to its end. I have been wont to express this view in the hearing of one and another little circle of Protestant friends during some twenty years past; and have done it with so much of the peculiar emphasis of conviction as has usually preserved it immune from challenge. It was even as a public expounder of the Scriptures that, out of them I preached myself into the Roman Catholic faith. What is more; there was here and there an auditor who, convinced by these expositions of the Sacred Word, passed on and reached the City of God well in advance of the expositor.

II

The twelfth year of my age was revolutionary, in a way; not, however, as regards any new religious impulse or awakening, for there was no trace of either; but it was the year of our removal as a family from southern New England to that which, fifty years since, was a part of the far West. If I had been but an example of uncommon juvenile religiousness, such a mere change of location might have signified nothing worth men-

tioning in the history of one's religious development. I was far from being that. I think I had a firm faith in God and His written Word. I was therefore ready to accept as true anything that I might read therein. That was all. I was well disposed toward religion. For the rest, my daily and always dominant impulses were those of the most devoted and enthusiastic young naturalist. I may seem to have given already more than a sufficient intimation of this bent of my mind; though really I have not given a tithe of the evidence I possess of the extravagance of my fondness, even as a small child, for everything I saw in nature. It was decidedly more than a mere bent of mind and if in these pages I often advert to this ruling passion, it will be because the true record of my interior life, even as to religion, cannot be made without it. Were I to select the merely theologic paragraphs of my life history and present these as the milestones of my journey Romeward, leaving all else out of view, there would be in that but the skeleton of a biography, even as to religion; and it would also seriously misrepresent; for the various hindrances, the powerfully distracting, and even effectively repellant influences that made my progess thither devious, and prolonged it during forty years, would have been left out of the account.

For the journey to the new home far away on the prairie frontier I had good mental equipment in the way of pictures in my boyish imagination. Every-

thing I had read, and the many things I had been told about the aspects of nature in those regions had been treasured in my mind and kept together. Of course there was reason why my store of information of this kind should have been considerable. When I was not yet six years old the teacher of the village school in summer spoke of me as her botanist; and from a time quite as early, my elder relatives seem to have known that I was best entertained by being shown some new plant or flower or by listening to their accounts of things of nature they had met with in their own journeyings away from home. My paternal grandmother, when a young wife and mother, had dwelt for some years in what were then — in 1818 to 1820 — the frontier settlements of western New York. She had often gratified me with some account of the early life on the New York state frontier, the strange points in which, were that they had scarcely roads, or the usual easy vehicles for getting from place to place, and that women and children even, as well as men, conveyed themselves hither and thither on horseback, whatever the occasion; also that they lived not exactly in houses like ours, but in rude cabins built of logs laid one upon another. These matters were of great interest to me, and I have now long known why; for the born naturalist is of his very birthright an ethnologist. Human beings, their different environments, varying modes of living, different customs, etc., are a part

of nature; even the most significant part of it. But this information about western life, manners and domestic economy were supplemented by the names, modes of growth and uses of several wild plants common in the wildwoods of the West, such as it was certain I had not seen; for this one of my two grandmothers was fond of plants, and grew some in her own garden that were always a particular delight to me because I never could meet with them anywhere else.

Of the very much more distant West, the prairie regions, I had also my mental pictures. Over and above all that a geography-loving boy of ten had gathered in by reading, and by listening to the narrations of men who had been there, I had now a rich accession of knowledge from my mother, who had been spending some months with relatives afar in the midst of the then very thinly settled prairies of central Illinois. She, to whom I owe the inheritance of this impassioned predilection for nature and all things beautiful, had the skill to picture to me vividly the glories of the springtime as she had seen them on the prairies, and in the then almost virgin forests of the Sangamon River in 1854.

The matured and educated traveler in lands beyond the sea realizes no keener pleasure than was mine as a boy, when, in passing by rail through western New York in the June of 1855, I saw what the log cabins were like that I had heard of, and

perceived along the road clumps of bushes of species unknown to me, and patches of flowers which I guessed to be the same in kind that my grandmother had described to me. Then, a few days later, in the new domicile builded on the verge of a wild forest, with miles of nearly unbroken prairie in the foreground, I was in paradise. The superabundant wealth of the whole country in new forms of plant life and animal life kept me long in a state something like rapture. And the ethnological aspect of this environment had its attractions. The scattered settlers, and the some hundreds of the people of the town a mile away, had almost all been immigrants from the South. They had their own social customs, and, most striking of all, to my ready ear, their linguistic provincialisms. I noted that some of their names for the commonest objects were other than those by which we knew the same; and in our intercourse with them, we children at least, soon learned and used their terms. Even their religion — at least that of the few who did not ignore the whole subject — had its peculiar phases; not, however, of such significance as to merit further mention; for I can recall nothing in this environment which influenced me at all in a religious way.

The summer following witnessed our exodus as a family northward to Wisconsin. The school facilities were excellent here, considering the newness of the country, and I, at thirteen years of age,

was now devoted to study in the public graded schools. Our home was a suburb in the then young and thriving city of Janesville. It was an epoch of much railway building in this part of the West, and this town just then was one of the centers of such activity. Our daily walk to school and back lay through a very considerable colony of foreign railroad laborers; and this colony was of much interest to the still ardent boy naturalist and ethnologist. Their odd-looking dwelling places were ranged closely together by dozens near the railway, and on railway land I am quite sure. They were all such small huts, between the hemispherical and the conical shape, as recalled those I had seen pictures of in books of geography and travel, as representing the habitations of uncivilized peoples in far away countries. They were low and seemed to have been constructed almost wholly of uniform squares of prairie sod laid one above another; but one could see that there had been at first a palisade of slabs and boards set on end and converging a little at the summit, over which the sod walls had been laid up; with also roof boards sustaining the sod roof. I noted the remarkable adaptability of these rounded sod dwellings so protective against the severity of the Wisconsin winter; and perceived that the dwellers in them were not at all what could be called uncivilized. Everything was cleanly in front of, and

around, the domiciles outside, and the women who kept them, old and young, were most respectably clad, though in old country mode of dress. In a word, it was a comfortable and really thrifty colony of new immigrants from Ireland. In our quite isolated Rhode Island countryside there were no foreigners; for the occasional Irish laboring man, or household servant, was not exactly thought of as a foreigner; and up to the time of my first interest in this western colony, I had never known that this people had a language all their own. When once, after their working hours and near nightfall I sauntered along their turf-built village, and groups of men were resting outside, smoking clay pipes and holding animated conversation, I observed with wonderment that not a syllable was to me intelligible. Language was always to me one of the mysteries; and, if I mistake not, it is much of the nature of an enigma to the profoundest and most philosophic ethnologists. Having been bookish no less than naturalistic almost from infancy, and being now at thirteen a venerator of all knowledge of whatever kind, these hard-handed, rude-visaged laboring men fresh from Ireland, took a sudden rise in my estimation, because of their ability to converse with equal readiness in two languages which sounded — as I now know that they really are — so utterly different. I ought not to pass this incident without saying, in proof

of the complete rural provincialism of my life up to that time, that this was my first listening to speech in any foreign language.

Now from this same community of foreigners — henceforth to my thinking foreigners because they had a foreign language — with none of whom I ever held a minutes' converse, I gained as by accident the suggestion of something new about religion. One Saturday morning in the month of April, as I strolled forth toward the open country in quest of any signs of spring in the world of plant or animal life, I chanced to meet what seemed like the whole of this Irish community, in Sunday clothes, coming home from Church. It seemed to me almost as if they had lost the run of the days of the week and mistaken Saturday for Sunday; and my curiosity was aroused to the pitch of asking a group of them why they had been to Church on that day of the week. A motherly appearing woman of middle age answered kindly: "It's Holy Saturday." It was my first intimation that there were people who kept sacred any other day but what was known as the "Weekly Sabbath." I had never yet heard or read so much as the names of Easter, Ascension Day or Pentecost, not to speak of Epiphany and All Saints. These great Christian festal days were as unknown to us Rhode Island Baptist and Friends' Society country children of sixty years since, as were the ritual observances of the Mahometans of western, or of the Buddhists,

of farther Asia. I myself have witnessed from its very first beginnings — which I should say were almost within the last thirty years — that movement that has restored to some observance, in even the most extremely Protestant organizations, of Christmas, Good Friday and Easter. When our friends the Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians and Unitarians remember, and religiously celebrate, these great days of the Roman Calendar, they are facing Romeward, and we rejoice.

On the morning when I had learned that there was in Christendom a Holy Saturday, that was all I knew of the Catholic ritual year. I was unaware that the day before had been Good Friday, and the day following would be Easter Day. As I said before, I had not so much as heard the names of these great days. The manner of my learning about the other great Catholic feasts I apprehend may read as a fairy tale; but I shall relate it. I am confident no other native American youth on the road to Rome — even attaining that happy destination without having crossed the sea — acquired from foreigners in America — Protestant foreigners at that — and in their language only at first, the names of the feasts which he only some years later learned to know by their English names of Epiphany, Palm Sunday, Good Friday, Easter, Ascension, Pentecost and All Saints. But at the time long ago when these things happened, and in the region where then my

lot was cast, it was only easy and natural that such an experience should befall a boy constituted as I was with strong predilections for the study of everything that was out of doors, from wayside weeds to forest trees, from shells and insects to birds and beasts and men of different races, nationalities and tongues. In the years from 1857 to 1859, as I remember them, southern Wisconsin then so new, became the chosen destination of many thousands of immigrants from Norway, a land and a people, the accounts of which as read in books, had made me curious about these immigrants. I viewed them in their quaint, ungainly, peasant costumes and listened to their unintelligible speech, with all interest. Such of this people as had been here a few years were filling all the places open for farm laborers and domestic servants everywhere.

During the long summer vacations of the three years named above — the years from 14 to 16 of my age — I was favored with clerical employment by a man of wealth who had extensive farming, inn-keeping and mercantile interests in a certain town on the line of a railway. My daily occupations held me in converse with a small multitude of Norwegians, men servants without, and women servants within doors. All these used only their own language among themselves. At the end of my second summer in the place, none of them ever spoke to me but in Norwegian. In the third sum-

mer, Norwegian immigrants, strolling in front of the buildings while their trains were side-tracked for a half-hour, were wont to look very incredulous and almost shake their heads, when Americanized countrymen of theirs affirmed to them that the boy they had been talking with was an American, none of whose ancestors even had seen Norway.

It is no marvel at all if a youth of ordinary intelligence, especially if endowed with ethnologic curiosity, under most favorable conditions masters a new language; but it is more and more a marvel to me, as I make inventory of my stock of earliest Catholic information, to note how much of it I gained from these Protestant foreigners, through having acquired their language. These were a rather religious people, of the Norwegian State Church, an ecclesiastical establishment that should have been called High Church Lutheran; and while those whom I knew were located at a distance of some fifteen miles from the nearest church of their communion, not one of them ever entered any one of the Baptist, Methodist, or other meeting-houses of the village; and some, on holy days, might be seen reading their Norwegian prayer books. These were the first prayer books I had ever seen. I had not even heard that there were such books. These contained, first of all, what seemed a regularly constituted order of public worship. There was a special Collect, Epistle, and Gospel for every

Sunday in the year, and every Sunday in the year had its particular name or designation. There were to be read here and there rubical directions for the official conducting of the service, and this service was called a name which translated in English would be High Mass. When, some years later, I had come to know both the Anglican Book of Common Prayer and the Roman Missal, I saw the Norwegian ritual as intermediately between the two, that is, more Roman than the Book of Common Prayer. From these people I first learned that there was such a rite as Confirmation; to which they were all admitted when passing from childhood to youth; but only after special instruction and preparation by the priest himself. After that they first went "to the altar," as the expression was. I also first understood from these people the doctrine of the importance of the sacrament of baptism. No child was to be permitted to die unbaptized. Any layman, or woman should administer baptism in case of sudden necessity.

This by no means ends the account of what I learned of Catholic truth and usage from these High Church Protestant Norwegian peasants; but the story must not be prolonged. It will be thought an extraordinary route by which to have gained one's first views of Catholic doctrine, and of liturgical public worship. The ritual year with its cycle of feasts, some more solemn, others less so, some concurring with Sunday, others sanctify-

ing equally days that occur in the midst of the week; the several sacraments and their sanctifying efficacy — all these and other points of really Catholic teaching and practice might more easily have come to my knowledge by means of service books in English, either Anglican or Roman; but the fact is, they never had been met with. I have shown before that what had started me in this unwonted direction had been the impulse of the nature student's desire to investigate even unknown peoples and their ways; a thing which is never possible of accomplishment to the full, without mastering the language of such people.

The effect of these definite impressions of something new in religion was marked, and has never been effaced. It must therefore here be taken some note of; not, however, to the extent of attempting rationally to account for the effect; for that I could not have done at that time. It was only at a later period that I was able to see how those effects had been wrought, and what the rational cause of them had been. I think that the one general impression I had, might have been indicated thus: that there was in substance a great deal more to that liturgical public religion, as I had read it and heard about it, than there was to that which I had been used to from infancy; or, to state it differently: I was placing a higher intellectual estimate upon this High Church Protestantism, as I may call it, than upon the formless,

creedless, most vague and intangible kind of religion which was all that I had known about until now. Once more, and to be a trifle less abstract: as regards instruction in the truths of Christianity, if one could have gained all that the one religion considered necessary, within a week, that called for by the other would have required so much more time that we may safely place it at two months. By way of illustration: if at the time about which I am writing, I could not have named in succession five great events in our Lord's infant life, it was because I do not think there could have been found in the membership of the Church of my more immediate forefathers a preacher who could on his part, have enumerated them without having first taken time for a specially careful perusal of the early chapters of all the Gospels. No event but the Crucifixion was dwelt upon in public teaching and preaching, nor even that event itself, so much as certain theological deductions therefrom. In the thought and teaching of these men, from whom I had learned what I knew of Christianity, the Crucifixion and death alone, and not the whole life of Our Lord from infancy forward, availed for us and was made part of the substance of our religion. Yet there was not a public service in the whole ear that was made commemorative of the Crucifixion and death of Christ, nor was there one in commemoration of the Nativity; for there was not, at least in our little provincial corner, and

among us children there, the knowledge that our little Christmas merry-making in reality marked the day of Christ's birth. It had not with us a whit more religious meaning than had the Fourth of July. As for the weekly Sabbath, every one of these was devoid of any specifically Christian significance. The only event it commemorated, from the year's beginning to its end was an epoch in the history of the people of Israel — at least with our wing of the Baptist sect, who kept literally the seventh day of the week — and the only authority for keeping it at all was the Law as given by Moses. It was not even a Christian observance at all, save as by adoption.

Now as compared with this, what greater breadth and depth of religion was that which found matter for pious grateful thought, and incentive to religious devotion, in every incident of the Incarnation, from the Conception to the Ascension and the coming of the Holy Ghost; how much more rationally more distinctively, even more intensely Christian is such an established order of divine worship as makes each passing year tell over again to all the Church the whole story of our Lord's Incarnate Life, and of the first founding of the Church. I did not reason out this matter at the time of this, my earliest intimation of the Christian Year. It was only a profound impression that I had received; a kind of mental awakening to the fact that there was really much

more to the Christian religion than I had hitherto had any intimation of. I was also entirely unaware that this book of public prayers and Scripture lessons in use by a Protestant nation, had been in every part borrowed from the Catholic liturgy; that in everything within it which seemed to me new, appropriate, instructive and beautiful, I was learning and admiring and being attracted to the Catholic religion. Is there such a gift of God to benighted but sincere souls as may be called a Catholic instinct? I have not heard, and I do not know.

III

The seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth years of my life were those of a college student. I was connected with no religious body and was unbaptized; for Baptist children — the paradox must be allowed — are not admissible to the Baptist Kingdom of Heaven; and now that I had outgrown childhood, and was sometimes urged to enter the ancestral fold, my religious inclinations — I dare not say instincts — were leading me, I could not have said whither, but certainly not in that direction. I had never yet seen a Catholic Church, or clergyman, or conversed on religion with a Catholic layman or woman.

Among books of religious biography and history which I read during this period was D'Aubignes' *History of the Reformation,* a Protestant history.

The work had been in our little family library ever since I could remember; and having once begun its perusal, I found it interesting. When I had read it my sympathies were all on that Catholic side of the controversy, which the historian himself had, of course tried to demonstrate as the wrong side. But that which, as far as I was concerned, was the very definite and important outcome of the perusal of this book was, that Luther's argument against the Zwinglians, and in favor of the doctrine of the Real Presence, convinced me thoroughly that this must be the true doctrine. On this article of faith — this central mystery of the Catholic religion — I have never had a doubt from that day to this. And a little piece of theological investigation followed naturally upon this theological discovery. For example; it was evident from the book of history I had been reading, that at the time of what was called the Reformation, there was a considerable body of Protestants to whom communion was nothing at all but a social and religiously commemorative partaking of bread and wine together. Certain others, also Protestant — for such had been Luther and his party — held as firmly the other doctrine. It was reasonable I should wish to know what the doctrine of the Lord's Supper was with each of the less than a half dozen Christian denominations that I then had ready means of knowing something of. The way I went about the investigation is characteristic of

this investigator. I did not go questioning ministers of the various denominations. That would have been to engage in controversy and waste precious time; also it was not necessary. As to the two or three different kinds of Baptists, I had witnessed their communions. They received what they called the "elements" sitting in their pews, as passed to them by the deacons of the congregation. I assumed that this complete unceremoniousness, this absence of every sign of special reverence in the transaction, must betoken that Baptists were Zwinglians. The conclusion was of course correct. Nevertheless, it is possible, indeed it is quite probable, that I should not have come to any conclusion about it had it not been for a comparison I was able to institute, by memory, between this communion rite and that of two somewhat different bodies of Methodists, both of which I had witnessed. These people, instead of sitting upright in their pews and taking bread and wine passed to them by deacons, arose and went forward individually, knelt at an altar railing, and received the elements directly from the minister, and then retired to their seats. This very different ceremony seemed as if it must imply a very different faith regarding the Lord's Supper. What should this particularly humble and prayerful posture, assumed at the moment of receiving, mean but a belief in the Real Presence? The conclusion was unavoidable; though in itself, and in this instance,

it was wrong. By readings in the early history and the later tenets of Methodism, which this line of investigation had led to, it became apparent that this which I may call the ceremonial of the Real Presence had by historical incident, and as matter of ancient usage, been retained by a people who had lost belief in that article of Christian faith.

In the course of this study my mind reverted to those Norwegian State Church prayer books, in which I had first learned of the yearly cycle of Christian Holy days; and I recalled that the people who used them called themselves Lutherans. It seemed now almost certain that the doctrine of the Real Presence must be a part of the Norwegian State Church creed; and so it is.

When about nineteen years of age, happening to be in the city of Madison, Wis., over Sunday, I made use of the opportunity — the first I had ever had — of attending mass. It was the last mass of the day. The church was a spacious one, well appointed, doubtless, and the congregation was large and evidently made up of people in various stations of life, high and low. I say this because my impression had been that none but foreigners of the poorer and less intelligent classes, were Catholics. The reader, who will understand the strange deviousness of my Road to Rome must know that I had not yet learned anything whatever of the Catholic religion as such. I was already a believer in much and very important Catholic

doctrine, but without knowing that it was Catholic. I did not even doubt the Real Presence as one of the conditions of sacramental communion, yet I had no intimation of the fact either that the Catholic mass was essentially the original of all Protestant communion services, or that the Presence was continued on Catholic altars by reservation. So the mass itself was meaningless to me; as were also the bodily reverences paid by all to the Divine Presence. That which is meaningless does not conciliate or attract. But before the conclusion of the service there was a sermon; and that was not meaningless. I even gained from it a new and important theological idea. The Sunday must have been the eleventh after Pentecost, for the Gospel was that of the miraculous giving of speech to the dumb man; the sermon being an exposition of that Gospel, and more particularly of our Lord's final word to the subject of the miracle: "See thou tell no man;" the argument being that the preaching of the Gospel is not to be undertaken by any one and every one who may feel a grateful impulse thereto, but only by such as have been ordained and authoritatively sent to that work. It was the doctrine of ecclesiastical authority as here supreme, and of the Christian unlawfulness of presuming to teach religion publicly without apostolic ordination and mission. The thought, though then I believe, quite new to me, made a lasting impression, which is the more significant in view of the fact

that the priest was not above mediocre ability and force as a preacher. It was my first accession of Catholic truth that had come directly, as from the fountain head, so to speak. Respecting the service as a whole, I must say that it did not attract me; which in view of my ignorance about it all, was not strange. Neither is it unaccountable that certain things about it were in a degree repellant; but these need not here be named.

Two years later I was for several months in a beautiful small city of the South, a seat of wealth and culture, not an emporium of business. It was Huntsville, Alabama, as it was forty-five years ago. Engaged, still as I always had been, chiefly in study, and first and before all else nature study, my interest in religion, and in that science by which alone religion in any sense is a possibility, namely, theology, was far from having diminished, indeed was as intense as ever, and I was still unconnected with any religious body. During my sojourn in Huntsville I attended service somewhere on Sunday mornings; at first, perhaps the Presbyterian, or possibly the Episcopalian, both of which were at the time entirely new to me. There were Baptist churches there, beyond doubt, but I never once thought of entering them. I had outgrown that. To a large Methodist church I was attracted a second time for the sake of hearing again an able preacher, somewhat dramatically eloquent. To the Presbyterian I went a third time; for the minister

was at once cultured and forceful without being either dramatic or loud; and there was a phase or two of the ceremonial that was new to me. Ceremonial is everywhere in religion. The deeper feelings of the soul expresses themselves in no way so perfectly and appropriately as by certain attitudes or postures of the body, which is the soul's seat and residence. Ceremony is therefore essential in social life, and to religion it is indispensable. Words cannot begin to express shades of feeling that come out perfectly and tellingly by a gesture of the hand or a slight change in bodily posture. Not one religious sect that ever professed to abjure all ceremony in worship, will be found without its own religious ceremonial of some sort.

We students of nature's myriad forms of life inevitably become systematizers. The kinds of plants and of animals are each so excessively numerous that, in order that we may view the whole comprehensively, we must first classify; separate between like and unlike and place like things by themselves, then view in groups the like, and yet again compare the like with the unlike. Up to this year of my life some religious notes of which I am now recording, while but a novice in theology and belonging to no church, I was already proficient in naturalistic systematizing. It was not much later than this, and after I had witnessed a few more Catholic Church morning services, that I saw

how easily the seven or eight denominational Sunday services that I knew of, fall into perfectly distinct groups.

In the one group there is everywhere agreement in this, that the chief occupation of the hour is preaching and listening. The very structure and appointments of the place tell this. One need not wait for the coming of preacher and congregation to learn this. The pulpit for the man, and the Bible for him to expound, are in the central place. The altar, symbol of Divine worship, is not even erected at one side or somewhere in a corner. It is absent.

In the other group the pulpit — often wanting in the smaller churches — holds a subsidiary place at one side, and the altar, symbol of the Divine Presence and of worship, is absolutely central; the one conspicuous object. The first glance at such an interior attests worship to be the principal occupation of those who may be gathered here on a Holy Day. From an interior like this, secular and social meetings and entertainments will be rigidly excluded; for the place has been consecrated to God and His worship. The place will recall to him who enters no memories of occurrences amusing or trivial, and only prayer and holy thought will be suggested. How as if moved by the very spirit of the place does each worshipper on entering there kneel and begin silently to pray; and the minis-

trant himself, though invested with the insignia of office, at first does likewise. Kneeling before the altar, he, as they have done, worships God.

In the churches where worship is reduced to the minimum and preaching is supreme, how anomalous would be the sight of a man or woman here and there kneeling long in unvoiced prayer before the minister's arrival. Such would not only make themselves conspicuous and singular in that environment. There might be grave wondering and questioning, whether they were not turning Episcopalians, and thus entering on the Road to Rome.

Now this classifying of churches by certain externals of public religion, though but tentative and incomplete, is none the less perfectly valid as far as it goes. For if we should go on, and take up the substance of religious belief as held by the two classes of churches, we should find the distinctions in this respect quite as pronounced. Everywhere under the sun, in religion as in the material universe, marked differences in outward form betoken corresponding differences in the inner spirit or vital part. And this classifying of religions according to externals is not mine, though I think I first saw the outlines of the grouping originally, and untaught. The grouping has been recognized, and received as valid by ultra-Protestants all through the centuries of Protestant history, as I suspect. Thousands of intelligent and observant men of various shades of Protestant belief or nearly

agnostic unbelief have said: "I do not see the real difference between Episcopalians and Catholics," and what thousands of church buildings there are in England, in Scandinavia, in Germany for High Church Protestant worship, which members of the other school of Protestantism could not by one mark or sign distinguish from Catholic churches, viewing them from within.

At the time and place of my first beginning to institute such comparison between the public worship of the Episcopal Church, as I saw it in Huntsville, and that which had in the main been familiar to me all my life, the Catholic congregation of the town was without a pastor and there were no services. Just then, when under other conditions I should have alternated for a time, no doubt, between the services of the Episcopal and Catholic churches, I received a powerful impression in favor of the Catholic. An intelligent Catholic, a soldier with whom I had formed an acquaintance, was so interested in my religious inclinations and questioning that he tried to explain some things and to remove certain wrong impressions, and, after a time offered to arrange that I should meet socially a certain Catholic clerical acquaintance of his then an army chaplain; I agreed, though not with any particularly anxious desire, or eagerness of expectation. No convert to the Catholic faith that ever was can have avoided more carefully than I the application of mere personal influence and persuasive-

ness; this possibly because of my being of a sympathetic nature, and thereby more susceptible to being misled by such influences. The meeting with the first Catholic priest, but one, whom I had ever seen, and the first with whom I had spoken, was a satisfactory meeting. I herewith met a quiet, dignified, altogether unobtrusive gentleman, and priest. We entered into conversation and other things were, I think, more talked about than religion. It was quite the kind of an interview that was at that moment desirable; for just then I was becoming a little acquainted with the Episcopal Church service and was very much drawn in that direction. I was also examining the Book of Common Prayer and discovering it to be essentially the counterpart, in my own language, of that Norwegian State Church prayer book, with its calendar of Christian Holy days, which had elicited my admiration a few years earlier, and besides this I was reading other matter appertaining to the Episcopal Church with much interest.

If from the pleasant evening with the chaplain, Father Towne, I had gained no new information about the Catholic religion, it was for the reason that I had not asked it. Possibly he may have inquired of me if I would like to read a certain Catholic book. I do not remember as to that. The book came, perhaps through the hands of my soldier friend. I read it carefully, found it most interesting and instructive, and returned it. I have

never seen the book from that day some forty-five years past, but I can almost trust the memory that seems to record its author's name as the Rev. Francis Xavier Weninger. Its title was *"Protestantism, and Infidelity."* Father Weninger's book, with its blunt uncompromising title, was the book I needed at the time it came to me. More than that; something less than a score of different volumes of Catholic argument that I have read between that day and this have left in no instance so deep an impression on my mind in favor of the Catholic religion as did that; and I am persuaded that such result was not due to its having been the first book of Catholic controversy that I had read.

The title in itself declares the argument, I should say quite unmistakably. He who denies so much as one article of the Catholic faith has started on a course, the end of which is total disbelief; not that this individual will necessarily reach that extreme; but that is logically the ending of the course, and others more logical will arrive at it.

I think it was in the year 1883, that in Germany they celebrated the four-hundredth anniversary of Martin Luther's birth; and even Protestant papers took note of the fact that the altogether conspicuous promoters of the celebration, and the most zealous and vociferous participants therein were the infidels and atheists. But Martin Luther did not in his day abjure very many of the doctrines of the Roman Church. His creed, if compared with those

of a score or two of nineteenth-century-born denominations would seem almost Roman Catholic.

However, it was not quite this aspect of the case which appealed to me at that early day when I read the book, but a somewhat different one; that under which all the long line of religious bodies dissentient from Rome appear as differing from the old faith only in that which they deny, even differing from one another only by the different lengths to which they severally go in their negation of Catholic belief; some few of them holding to almost everything except the universal authority of the Supreme Pontiff, another group denying the Real Presence, another repudiating Confirmation, others repudiating the Sacrament altogether, until you come to such as doubt the soul's immortality, and the very existence of Deity. To me the proposition was new, and, because of its first appearance of perfect truthfulness, was somewhat startling. If the Catholic Church be the one only repository of all religious truth, it is entitled to the allegiance, unreserved, of all who desire to know religious truth and avoid error. But the mind, even not well matured, that has been used to scientific research in the realm of nature, has already learned to wait, consider carefully, look farther, and then again consider, before accepting any new proposition as verifiable.

That tentative grouping of the variations of Christianity according to which the line was to be

drawn — to be brief without meaning to be uncharitable — between what I would have called the worshipping denominations and the preaching denominations — this was to be collated now with a classification, which placed the Roman Catholic Church all by itself on one side the line, and on the other side, along with the half creedless and the utterly disbelieving, those bodies which both as to external form and inmost belief, seemed so intimately allied to the Catholic Church.

The two classifications are not incompatible. That is easily seen. The determination of two groups in each case is by different criteria. They result from attempts to classify from different viewpoints. One of them comes from regarding organizations ecclesiastical as repositories of revealed truth; the other, from regarding how much or how little worship of the God of revealed truth appears in their most solemn public gatherings. Both the groupings may therefore be valid, and if so are naturally reconcilable.

IV

It was inevitable that a young man of the Middle West, ardently devoted to botany, and having already by a dozen years' study of it in the valley of the Mississippi, partly conquered that region, should aspire to some new and different field. In 1870 the Rocky Mountains were beginning to be accessible by rail. In April of that year I reached

Denver, then a small town. Taking up my abode for the season at a rural domicile a few miles out of the city, I was within reach of the lower mountains and near enough to Denver to walk in either direction. On Sunday mornings I walked into town to attend Church. One of the purposes I had in view for going so many hundreds of miles from home and old friends to live among utter strangers, was in order that I might make choice between the Catholic Church and the Episcopal. I knew that to join either one would be a disappointment and grief to those to whom I was most indebted; and by reason of the great distance I had placed between them and myself I felt that I could act freely, and take time to prepare my family for news of whatever I might ultimately decide to do.

After the passing of nearly forty years I do not recall to a certainty which of the two churches I sought out on that first Sunday morning; but I think it must have been the Catholic, at that time a small unfinished building and the cathedral of good Bishop Machebeuf. I have few very definite recollections of this, my second attendance on a Catholic Mass; and those are recollections of such impressions as were, if not unfavorable, at least not favorable. How, in reason, should I have expected to be favorably impressed by a service of the meaning of which I knew nothing beyond this, that it was a strange peoples' worshipping of God, the ritual being in a language which probably none

but the ministrants themselves understood; the progress of the service from stage to stage being indicated by sign and ceremony understood by the body of worshippers, but which was unintelligible to me. Though a believer in the Real Presence, compelled to that belief by the Master's own unmistakable language as recorded in the Gospels, I was still ignorant of the very fundamentals of Catholic public worship, and it was not to be expected that I should have any comprehension of its ceremonial. Here also, and for the first time in my life, I found myself in the midst of a cosmopolitan congregation. The worshippers, it was plain, were French, Italian, Spanish, German and Irish, almost exclusively. To what one church do people of all nations resort for worship on a Holy day but to the Roman Catholic? Could not that vindicate to itself the title of the Universal Church of God? This question, which I later found unanswerable, had not yet arisen in my mind. We mortals are not all intellect. The sensibilities assert their right — whether it belongs to them or not — to a part in the ruling of our life.

I attended St. John's Episcopal Church often on Sunday mornings, and began the use, and the careful study, of the Book of Common Prayer; felt anew the beauty and sweetness of that cycle of feasts and fasts that make the Christian Year and at the same time teach the story of the whole life of Christ; saw in this, and almost everything else,

that this book and these services were the English counterpart of the Scandinavian High Church service book which had so pleased and impressed me in the Norwegian language ten years or so before, and which had been the first prayer book I had either seen or heard of.

At the end of some six months of residence near Denver, without having made the acquaintance of any clergyman or layman of any denomination, but after much Prayer Book and some further Biblical study, my decision was made. I called on Bishop Randall to ask that he admit me by Confirmation to the communion of the Episcopal Church. I had been baptized two or three years before. The bishop, after some reserved and courteous inquiries into my case, cordially appointed a day and hour for further converse on the matter. That day came, and at the end of a not very prolonged interview, a time was set for my Confirmation, which took place a few weeks later. Almost immediately thereafter, certainly at the next call I paid the Bishop, he proposed that I become a candidate for Holy Orders. He had then somewhat recently opened an academy, and in connection with that a theological school, in which latter he had a few candidates. In September of the year 1871 Bishop Randall admitted me to Deacon's Orders. In January, 1873, he ordained me to the ministry of the Episcopal Church.

V

The more than twelve years of ministry in the Episcopal Church form an epoch of course well marked, but of which no particular account can be given here. But at the very outset, after having now given more than two years to a systematic study of Christian theology, in the course of which I had learned very many things, there had been no revolutionization of the general views I had reached while still hardly past boyhood. The old classification of organized bodies professedly Christian was as far as possible from having been invalidated. It was seen to rest on other and more essential differences between the two groups than I had before apprehended. What I had for convenience thought of as the group of worshipping organizations were found to assert a claim to being in the Apostolic Succession; that is, to regard themselves as being historically continuous with the Apostolic Church, and essentially at one with it. To have had bishops consecrated in unbroken succession from the apostles was even an essential; and in such wise as to make of the denominations which had classed themselves as "evangelical," merely human and voluntary associations, the ministers of whom, never having been ordained episcopally, that is, by a successor of the apostles, have not been ordained at all, and are only laymen. So firmly and so consistently was the Episcopal Church, like

the Roman Catholic, found to stand by this doctrine as fundamental, that were a Methodist bishop or two, and any number of Presbyterian or Baptist ministers to apply for admission to the ministry of the Episcopal Church, they must at the very first concede that they had never been ordained; and beyond that must consent to remain for the first year of their communion with that Church, as humble lay members.

Another essential characteristic of this wing of the army of Christendom seems to be its use of a system of religious ordinances called Sacraments as absolutely necessary to the soul's health, and its growth in holiness; each Sacrament conveying its own special grace and virtue not to be had by other means. The Christian bodies ranged on the other side of the line have in general scarcely any idea of such channels of Divine grace as Sacraments. Almost their only recognized means of grace and salvation are simple faith and prayer. This difference between the two groups of Christian bodies can hardly be made clear without taking up one example. Let it be Holy Baptism. With the Catholic group this initial rite is believed to regenerate the soul that receives it; procures to that soul remission of all its sins, gains for it the first accession of supernatural life, if one may so speak. It is the Sacrament, the reception of which is indispensable to obtaining the grace of any other of the seven sacraments. Now for the highest ap-

preciation of this Sacrament among any "Evangelical" bodies, one might naturally enough look to the body that distinguishes itself by the very name Baptist. That sounds as if it must belong to a people who make very much of Holy Baptism; but the very reverse is true.

That the Episcopal Church, judged by its creed and official standards was definitely a sacramentarian, and therefore a true and apostolic church, was plain enough. It was also commonly acknowledged, at least by many clergymen of learning and influence, that under adverse conditions this Church had in practice declined greatly from apostolic and Catholic usage at certain points, and had become too protestantized in times comparatively recent. Chiefly by means of what was known as the Catholic party in the Church, its restoration to apostolic faith and practice was in progress. This was something like the situation as it appeared to me when, more than thirty-five years since I was admitted to its ministry.

In the missionary stations, to which I was first appointed, unexpected successes attended my ministrations. Before I was anticipating such results there were postulants for membership in the Episcopal Church from persons hitherto of Baptist, or Methodist, or Presbyterian antecedents and affiliation. Also there were those who before scarcely acquainted with this Church, became regular attendants and ready supporters of it, of whom it

was reasonable to hope that eventually they would become actual converts.

In 1874 I received altogether unexpectedly a call to the rectorship of a parish in far away California. Earlier in the year I had declined dear Bishop Randall's bidding to become his curate in the Denver pro-cathedral. I could not forego the fascination of the botanical fields that lay all around me at the remote and small mission stations. I accepted the California rectorship and removed thither. It was an old parish, well established, and the wave of Catholic restoration had hardly yet reached the shores of the Pacific. The manner of conducting divine service in this church had been always of the Low Church type.

After some months I announced that on all future Sundays there would be a celebration of Holy Communion at half past seven in the morning. Common as this early service was even then in the cities and towns of the East, it was sure to have the appearance of a startling and dangerous innovation in an old and rather provincial Californian parish. The day after this announcement had been made good Mrs. R——, of Belfast, one of my parishioners, on chancing to meet me, was in hardly a placid mood. She protested that when she became ready to attend an early mass she would make her way to the top of the other hill, pointing in the direction of the Catholic Church, whose membership was probably then more than the aggregate

membership of all the other churches in Vallejo. Mrs. R—— was apparently serious about the matter, and I think that I did not attempt to expostulate with her, or defend my course. It was therefore with a feeling quite beyond surprise that I observed her to have been the first to enter the church on the following Sunday morning; and she was always one of the few to gather there at that service, and frequently a communicant.

Within little more than a year from the date of my coming to this parish, a domestic calamity at home called me to the East. It became impossible I should return soon, and I resigned the rectorship. It proved to have been one of the most memorable years of my life; and that in respect to things not yet told.

I must here note a few other experiences in my California parish — the town of Vallejo was more than half Roman Catholic; many of the most prominent citizens were converts to that faith, with some of whom I had of necessity become acquainted. I had also once called at the clergy house to pay my respects to the pastor and his curates. On a certain day of the Christian Year I always paid this call wherever I might be located. There are those who will smile when I name that day. It was the feast of the Epiphany. Such a call would of course be duly returned by the Catholic pastor; but that was about the utmost extent to which my acquaintance with my Roman brethren went. I have in-

timated before that in religion I felt personal influence to be undesirable, and had somewhat resolutely avoided placing myself where I would be subject to it. It was some years later, I think, that I learned that at this time an occasional Mass was being said in St Vincents' Church for my conversion; also that not a few lay members of that large congregation were offering prayers for that consummation.

It must have been later, and some time in the winter of 1875 that I once again entered St. Vincent's Church at evening, just to attend Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. It was to me a new function, and so sweetly attractive that I went a third time. On this occasion I realized that I must discontinue it. The drawing was too manifestly irresistible. To frequently expose myself to that influence would surely land me in the Roman Church. I felt no doubt of it, and went my way. A scientific man, long accustomed, curiously enough and not always unsuccessfully, to applying scientific methods to the solving of theological problems, I did not ask myself any questions as to why it was, and what it was, about that short ceremony that so effected me; nor did I investigate the personal psychology of this particular feeling. There was no need of that bit of research; for in my inmost soul I did not fail to recognize the cause. There were several things about all this which I did not then know. I was totally unaware, and could never

have guessed that in this same church and at that altar there were sometimes offered the most efficacious prayers known to Christians for my conversion to the Catholic Faith. I was entirely unaware, of what I long afterwards heard from the subjects themselves, that strong-minded men, not believing in the Church at all, or even in the Divinity of Christ, had found themselves under an irresistible impulse to kneel at Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, when happening to find themselves within a European Cathedral at such a moment.

VI

The suspicion that there might be an Eucharistic Presence in the Roman Catholic Churches such as the spiritually sensitive — if I may venture so bold an expression — might feel, was a rather powerful one. If this should prove true, the fact would be portentous, to say the least, to our Branch Church Theory. There could not be one Eucharistic Christ in one Branch and another in the Roman. However, one must not act precipitously on somewhat mystical impressions however deep and strong; and I continued on my way; not, however, without investigating the Branch Theory at one or two other points where it had begun to seem vulnerable.

I had been many times edified and stimulated by noting the depth and strength of faith, the constancy in prayer, and the serene supernatural com-

posure of a few Catholic friends of mine in various, even the lower, walks of life; conditions of spiritual advancement which they themselves had no idea they were disclosing when conversing with me about religion. Here again was a problem. If I myself had been in any deep distress of mind and in need of some support to my own faith and hope, it would have been to these Roman Catholic friends that I would have gone.

As for myself, I could note apparently no progress in the interior life, as the years came and went; and this was most unsatisfactory and disappointing, and now and then I proposed to myself the bold question whether I should not be almost sure to make more progress in the interior life as a member of the Roman Catholic Church.

These various misgivings and suspicions all converged and met — resolved themselves into the one grave question: Is this Anglican Communion really a branch of the Catholic Church? Its standards of doctrine are Catholic. The language of its liturgy and of its ordinal is in substance the same as that of the Roman liturgy and the Roman pontifical. Its priests are ordained in the same terms, purporting to convey the same commission. Its Eucharist is consecrated in the same words of Christ, and its communicants receive on their knees what is delivered to them as the Body of Christ. But what of all this if it should be proved that its Bishops are not validly consecrated?

What if in those terribly revolutionary times of the sixteenth century, when in England few knew what they believed, and priest and prelate alike seemed not to care what they did, so long as they obeyed the royal mandate in matters ecclesiastical — what if then the apostolical succession was really lost? In this case, to the deeply and sincerely Catholic minded party in the Anglican Church, it is but a solemn, dignified, even stately, orderly and imposingly beautiful deceit.

Such grave doubts and fears as I have given expression to above were not yet burdening my mind at all when, in the year 1882, I entered upon what was destined to be my last rectorship. It was that of St. Mark's Church, Berkeley, California; a parish already well established, and supposed to be of the greater importance as being located close by the most considerable institution of learning on the Pacific coast, the University of California. Realizing the high compliment that the Rt. Rev. Dr. Kip, Bishop of California, had paid me in making the appointment, I entered upon the work with zeal, paying little heed to occasionally recurring doubts.

I had now been in the Ministry nine years, and in each parish and mission that I had served there had been those who had suggested, mostly in a perfectly friendly if not half jesting way, that I was probably on the Road to Rome and might easily land there some day. It was this parish, so promisingly located for future influence, which be-

came the first — as it was the last — which I was destined to disrupt.

With rest from all disturbances, official and parochial, with also such academic duties as were no more to me than a delightful recreation, I now had time to reflect on my own theological and spiritual status again. It was early clear to me that the experiences of a would-be Catholic pastorate in a Protestant church — had really silenced no doubts; that these had actually gained both volume and momentum.

Two years passed during which I tried with indifferent success to teach Catholic doctrine to a congregation that was chiefly ultra-Protestant, when it became plain that there must be made a new experiment, both as to church environment and the matter of my own spiritual development. In personal religion I had seemed to gain no ground for years. I must try the Roman Catholic Church as at least somewhat hopefully supplying the means of saving my soul.

To one in my circumstances at that time, and with a strong sense of obligation to many kind and devoted friends who had stood by me in all things and who had steadily protested in the face of many accusers that I was no Romanizer; that there was not the slightest likelihood of my ever becoming a Roman Catholic, my position now was a difficult one. I would have to place these devoted and self-sacrificing friends in a situation where the other

side would be sure gleefully to exclaim, "We told you so! We were right! We knew it would be so!" that was the greatest trial of my life, as now I beheld it in near prospect.

Late in the autumn of 1884, however, I saw that the step must be taken. I entertained the gravest doubt of my ever having been ordained a priest; consequently that I had ever consecrated the Holy Eucharist or administered a sacrament other than that of Baptism. On this supposition I had misled, however unintentionally, and with whatever of good faith, quite a multitude of people who, under my ministrations, had come into this Church, trusting that it had all the Sacraments and a Catholic priesthood. Resolved to make the change — really in these and some other aspects a dreadful one — I took counsel with no one. The pastor of the Catholic Church not far from St. Mark's, an aged priest of gentle birth, highly cultured mind, and of deepest piety, had long been my friend, for I had called on him at every Epiphany, as my custom was, and had met him casually here and there. But, as I have said, in critical times such as this, I have always avoided personal influence, as being a motive power undesirable in one of sympathetic temperament. Hence I did not take counsel from even this venerable and most friendly priest. In my own mind the die would soon be cast. I had set the day, though none knew it.

VII

At the conclusion of the last service on All Saints' Day, 1884, I returned to the sacristy, put off my vestments, and knew that I had officiated for the last time as a clergyman of the Episcopal Church. No one else had the remotest idea that this was my determined resolution. It was, however, one which I knew I should keep inviolate. I had most thoroughly tested this Church in its aspect of a Branch of the Apostolic Church of Christ, and had come to think that most probably it was not such. I had given to this institution a good proportion of my time and energies during twelve precious years of early manhood; nor did I regret having done so. The paths of our lives are strange, wonderful, mysterious even, inasmuch that I doubt that the philosophic mind, or the devout, or even the sincere, indulges in regrets, or should even dare to do so if thereto tempted.

The day following this resolution was most serene. I think it would have been such had there been tempests and earthquakes.

On the fifth of February, 1885, I was formally received into the Church. There was one experience which I now looked forward to with eagerness; with all reverence I say experience. I mean the reception of Holy Communion. In the parish Church near Berkeley, two days later, in the early morning, this favor was granted me at the hands

of him who was now my pastor. I am sure no extraordinary favor had been vouchsafed me, and that the experience of that hour was such as benignly comforts others who, after years in the desert places of the world ecclesiastical, are brought to Christ's Church and to His Altars.

But however that may be, I went forth from that humble sanctuary that morning in a state of the most perfect certainty that I had never until that hour received Holy Communion; that therefore I had never celebrated that Eucharist myself in all the years of my supposed priesthood, and that I had never been other than a layman. To explain this conviction is not called for; is not possible. But after twenty-three years of life in the communion of the Roman Catholic Church, there has not arisen the shadow of a doubt that it is the one Church of God, and the real rightful home of every Christian soul.

THE REV. JOHN HANDLY,

Priest of the Congregation of St. Paul the Apostle.

My ancestors on both sides were pre-Revolutionary settlers in Kentucky and Tennessee, and members of the Presbyterian Church, in which I received the ordinary home and Sunday-school religious training. At the age of fifteen, "*The Story of the Resurrection*" by Dr. Furness, father of the Shakesperian scholar, fell into my hands, and strongly tempted me to deny the Divinity of Christ. I referred the matter at once to a clergyman — not a Presbyterian nor a Unitarian — who enthusiastically espoused the Unitarian argument. Accordingly, religion was practically banished from my life during the next seven years. Conversation with an eminent scientist, who dismissed as irrational the idea of a personal God, brought home to me the desolation of life without faith, and stimulated afresh the religious instinct.

My submission to the Catholic Church was nothing more complicated than pursuit of this instinct to its uttermost logical conclusion. I think the first hint, that the Church has more to give than Protestantism offers, came to me from Zola's "*La Faute de l'Abbé Mouret.*" I was in no way under the influence of Catholic personality or apologetic

literature while reaching the decision to become a Catholic. I conferred briefly with a priest on two difficulties, but even in respect to these, I reached and accepted the Catholic position chiefly unaided. I regard my conversion as an instance in proof of the fact that Catholicity is latent in the average American, and awaits only the exercise of spiritual candor to be evoked in practice.

NICHOLAS LOUIS HORNSBY, M.D., A.M.,

SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI.

I was born on a plantation in Shelby county, Kentucky, in the year 1821. My father was of English descent, and an Episcopalian. My mother was of Irish descent and a Presbyterian.

My father was very liberal in his religious views, and as there was no church of his faith near by he usually attended the Presbyterian service with my mother. She was a strict observer of the tenets of the austere sect to which she belonged. One of their principal laws was the keeping the Sabbath day holy. This meant the abstinence from all amusements, however innocent, and all diversions whatever. The Sabbath routine for us boys was going to catechism at nine o'clock in the morning, and then remaining for the service which usually lasted about two hours. After dinner, which on Sunday was a very frugal one, each of us boys had to read a page in the family Bible, and the others were to remain during its reading. I must have had the religious instinct very strongly developed, not to have had it crushed by such unnatural restraints upon the common pleasures of childhood. It stood the test however, and even since my con-

version I have always had a strong inclination toward the observance of that Protestant law.

My mother was a very religious woman; and was often engaged in discussions with her neighbors, but as each had a different point of view, these controversies terminated, as is generally the case, where they began.

I was sent from home to Center College, Danville, Kentucky, when I was about twelve years of age. It was a Presbyterian college — the entire faculty being of that sect. The president, Dr. William C. Young, was rather liberal for one of his creed. Although the President seemed liberal in his views, and not over-zealous in enforcing his ideas upon the students, the college was a veritable hot-bed of Calvinism. The students had catechism classes, Bible classes, prayer meetings, etc., and while this religious fervor inspired me with a certain degree of sympathy, I felt that I could not keep up with the pace and so held aloof.

At that time in Kentucky the Catholic was as unknown as a Buddhist would be now. This may be explained by the fact that Kentucky being a slave state, the Irish immigrant never or rarely entered it, and as they were pioneers of Catholicity, few churches were built in that state. There was a Jesuit college at Bardstown, and a convent of Sisters of Charity; a church at Louisville, and one at Lexington, and a few others.

A Catholic was so rare a sight, that when a Catholic workman came to my father's house, he was pointed out to us children as a curiosity.

The bitterness of feeling existing between the different sects, and by all of them against the Catholic Church, is incredible to us of the present day. One might have thought from the intensity of their hatred that instead of representing the Prince of Peace, they represented the Prince of War. It was an age of controversy. Many of the prominent Catholic bishops were drawn into controversies with Protestant ministers and statesmen. Archbishop Hughes of New York, had as his opponent, Dr. Robert Breckenridge of Kentucky. Archbishop Purcell of Cincinnati was opposed by Dr. Campbell, founder of the Campbellite or Christian sect. Besides these disputations with the bishops of the Catholic Church, the members of the various denominations were constantly arguing among themselves.

Fuel was added to this un-Christian state of feeling by the advent of a set of vile characters who went about the country giving lectures against the Catholic Church. One Maria Monk, styling herself an "escaped nun," told the most shameful and scandalous lies about Catholic Sisters. Then there were ex-priests saying that they had left the Church because of its corrupt practices, when in fact all of them had been thrown out of the Church for drunkenness and immorality. They told such

abominable and bare-faced lies, that it is incredible that they could attract the attention of decent people; but prejudice and rancor was so great that nothing said against the Church was too horrible for belief.

Dr. Rice, a Presbyterian minister living at Bardstown, and editor of a paper, published some of these scandalous statements in regard to the Jesuits. The Doctor had such a following in the community that the Jesuits felt called upon to vindicate themselves and brought suit against him for libel. The suit was bitterly contested by the ablest lawyers the country could produce, and since the very character of the opposing parties was involved, one can easily see the importance and interest that was attached to this case. The suit dragged along for years as is usual in such cases, but finally reaching the Supreme Court it was decided in favor of the Jesuit Fathers.

About this time (1844), occurred a conversion of much importance to the Church, and one which astonished the religious and literary world: Dr. Orestes Brownson, a man of international reputation as a profound thinker, became a Catholic, asking only for the blessing of the Church, promising in return filial loyalty and implicit obedience.

Such an act from such a man was incomprehensible to the general public. The Church was at the lowest ebb of its existence in this country, and the Jesuits, who were the most prominent of the religious Orders at this time, saw their name used as

a synonym for all that is treacherous and deceitful.

Soon after his conversion, Dr. Brownson established his Review, and, being a man of exceptional ability, and an essayist of the highest order, his publication ranked among the leading magazines of the country. This was of much benefit to the Church; for the Review reached the intellectual world, placing Catholic principles before them clearly and convincingly.

In the meantime I had grown to mature manhood, and while practicing my profession took a lively interest in both religious and social affairs. My friends and associates were all Protestant, in fact I had never yet met a representative Catholic of either sex.

I could not but feel that the Protestant cause lost instead of gained in dignity by the encouragement given to ex-priests and ex-nuns, so called. They were coarse and vulgar, without a trace of that refinement which is so striking a characteristic of convent and seminary training, and which can never be wholly effaced. In fact the better class of the Protestant element perceived this and kept aloof from their meetings.

At this period of my life my mother and I saw much of each other. During my college days and while studying my profession I had been absent from home most of the time. My father had been dead for several years and circumstances obliged me to remain at home. In conversation with my mother

the subject of religion was seldom broached. She had told me that in my early infancy she had dedicated me to God, and she felt assured that in His own good time He would call me to His service. Besides, according to the teachings of her Presbyterian creed, human agency was of little avail: You could not come, unless called, and when called would be constrained. As for myself, I had felt that I was in the true fold since my earliest consciousness.

About this time I attended a Presbyterian revival meeting with my mother. The minister came around the church, as is the custom, to talk to those interested, and asked me if I felt an interest in my soul. I said "most certainly, above all things," but that I did not feel that this was the proper time or place to discuss the subject. I added that I would be pleased to see him at my home. He was a refined, cultured gentleman, and we became great friends; but the subject of my conversion was never again referred to by either of us.

I felt at this time as one involved in an inextricable labyrinth of perplexity and doubt. It seemed indeed that I was within the fold but I did not know the Shepherd and could not recognize His voice. I attended the Presbyterian church regularly, but these services were not at all satisfactory. The minister was a learned man, having been a professor at Princeton. He had been removed on account of some erratic opinions he had held in regard to the supernatural life. His sermons were

merely lectures, neither practical nor devotional. What was peculiar in his religion was his antagonism to the Blessed Virgin. It was not the antagonism of negation, but active and aggressive. To mention her name was to flaunt a red flag before him. He would bristle up at once and by his whole expression would show his aversion. I have observed this same condition of mind in several Protestant ministers.

How to extricate myself from this sea of perplexity I knew not. I had no one to whom I could go for advice. The Protestant sects worshiped God more after the manner of the old Jewish dispensation than of the new. It was a God of fear, not of love, whom they adored. They never spoke of Calvary in their sermons. Of a conscious companionship with God, or of a loving intercourse with Him (of which the Saints speak so much), they seemed to have no conception. There were no doubt many individual exceptions; but the spirit of their devotion, like their God, was one of fear and not of love.

I wandered blindly in this labyrinth seeking an outlet and found none. I chanced on Swedenborg's writings and was much taken with them. His views of the spirit world were fascinating. If we were compelled to rely upon private judgment as our guide, we could not do better than accept Swedenborg's teachings. Still there was in me that infinite and unsatisfied yearning of the soul for

a God of love. In this state of mind I felt the great danger that there might come a time when I would give up the search and lose all hope — that Richter's dream in which he had scanned the abyss of the Infinite and found no God, might be a reality. But to give up the idea of God and to contemplate in His stead complete chaos seemed appalling: and yet where was the alternative? If there were a God, how could He have left us with this yearning of the soul unsatisfied, in this path with seemingly no outlet, leading to many paths, beyond that Nowhere?

At this time I decided to settle in St. Louis. There I came in contact with an altogether new atmosphere. The best society of the place was French and Catholic. The wealth and the culture of the city was all to be found among the Catholics. Within this circle I formed the acquaintance of a family from Guadaloupe, that of M. de L—.

This family, cultivated and refined in every respect was nevertheless Catholic. How was it possible? How could a religion, represented by its enemies as only suitable for the low and depraved be acceptable to people so intelligent as they were? It was an astounding revelation. I was much attracted by these people, and in course of time became quite intimate with them. The Catholic religion at length became a subject of interest to me and I was induced to examine the basis of the Catholic faith. I read Milner's "*End of Controversy*," and Moëh-

ler's "*Symbolism,*" this latter I found very satisfactory. Moëhler admits that each of the Protestants sects had some truth, otherwise they could not have existed; but truth only in fragments. They were segments of a circle of which the Catholic Church was the whole, and contained all truth. I felt the light gradually breaking through this cloud of doubt.

Instead of reading volume after volume on the subject, I resolved to compare Catholic claims with the teachings of the Gospel, and if they stood the test the Catholic was the only true church.

I said to myself Christ who is the truth itself would not teach one thing in His Gospel and another through His Church. The difference between the teachings of the Church and Protestantism is very marked, so it would not be difficult to find who has the best claim to Gospel support. There were, I grasped, four dogmas of the Church in which it differs altogether from Protestantism:

The Papacy,
Confession,
The Real Presence,
Authority.

If these are taught by the Gospels then there could certainly be no doubt in my mind as to the validity of the claims of the Catholic Church.

I found in St. Matthew, chapter xvi, 18, 19, that Christ in speaking to Simon named him Peter, a rock, and said, "*Upon this rock I will build my*

Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

Here we have both the establishment of the Papacy and the perpetuity of the Church.

In the xx chapter, verses 22, 23 of St. John's Gospel, I found that Christ in giving His commission to His Apostles, breathed on them and said, *"Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained."* This establishes the confessional without a doubt.

The Real Presence is demonstrated by chapter vi of St. John's Gospel in which Christ said, *"Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His Blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day."*

I found that all these teachings were fully sustained by the Gospel and that no honest mind could hesitate to accept them. I conferred with Father Damen, the noted Jesuit missioner, who received me into the Church in the fall of 1855. I have ever felt grateful to that saintly old man for his kindness to me at that time.

Strangely enough when I told my mother of my decision, she offered no objection, much to my surprise.

I have often thought that the born Catholic does not appreciate the great blessings he has inherited. The convert who has only known them after ma-

ture manhood, measures their value to the fullest extent.

The convert realizes this when he leaves the confessional, with the words "*Ego te absolvo*" ringing in his ears. He realizes this when he sees the gray-haired sinner rising from his knees, regenerated by the waters of baptism. He realizes it when he sees the abandoned criminal standing on the scaffold attended by his confessor with crucifix in hand. He realizes it when he sees the wife smiling through her tears upon her dying husband who is receiving a new life through the ministry of the Church. He realizes it when he sees the grief-stricken mourner kneeling before the altar praying for those she has loved and lost. He realizes it again when he sees the sufferer from a hopeless disease, awaiting death with the crucifix in his hand, with peaceful resignation in the assured hope of an eternity of happiness with God his Father.

These are some of the blessings which inspire the convert so forcibly, in the Church of his adoption, and it is of these blessings that Protestantism has attempted to rob us while claiming to have reformed the Church. And what has it given in their place? Nothing, absolutely nothing. It is a mere negation and as such must necessarily die. Even now it is passing away and we are offered in its place the worship of humanity under a system of Philanthropy, but this will never satisfy the soul. It yearns for a God who can console it in its suffer-

ings, and give assurance to its hope of an eternal life beyond the grave.

Since my conversion, I have felt perennially welling in my heart, a feeling of gratitude ever seeking expression in the words *Deo Gratias* (Thanks be to God), and I feel that it is eminently proper that I should close this narrative with these same words *Deo Gratias.*

THE REV. DANIEL E. HUDSON, LL.D.

NOTRE DAME, INDIANA.

Priest of the Congregation of the Holy Cross; Editor of the "Ave Maria."

My Dear Miss Curtis:

My "Road to Rome" was a very short one, not worth describing. I was baptized surreptitiously, though it had been agreed that I should be brought up a Methodist, like my father. When old enough to attend church, he took me with him one Sunday to the little meeting-house in the town where we lived, but I didn't even cross the threshold. The doleful tolling of the bells frightened me, and I then and there, at the age of about four years, abjured Protestantism!

A girl who worked for us solemnly declared that the devil had undoubtedly frightened the poor child, and I was much impressed by this view of the matter. My father never again spoke of taking me to church with him, and so — I became a convert! I remember the incident vividly, and still have a horror of Protestant church bells; they never seem to ring out, but to toll solemnly, ruefully.

Some relatives of mine — distant relatives, I trust — were among the most intense anti-Catholics of former days. One of them, I have heard, was

responsible for the burning of a church in Philadelphia; another, known as the "Angel Gabriel," by his fanatical speeches in Maine during the year 1854, caused the outrage on Father Bapst, who was tarred and feathered, and ridden on a rail one night by a miscreant mob at Ellsworth in the same State. That, I suppose, was why this saintly priest always treated me with especial affection. He would stop and take my hand (I hope it was always clean) whenever we met, and call me his "little Angel Gabriel." What harrowing memories I must have revived, all unconsciously, in that venerable "confessor for the Faith," as our learned historian, Dr. Shea, calls him! Every one loved and revered Father Bapst, he was so kind and gracious and gentle and good; but I think we young folk loved him best, our hearts were so like his.

I was taught the catechism by Miss Emma Forbes Cary. That was long, long ago, however, I yet remember — I hope she has forgotten — all the trouble she had in getting me to pronounce "Epiphany" and "Transubstantiation" correctly. It used to be a wonder to me why Agassiz, with such a convert as Miss Cary in his family, did not at once became a Catholic like Newman, Brownson, and other great men.

My vocation to the priesthood was encouraged by Longfellow. He once asked me in his kindly way what I intended to be when I became a man. My prompt answer was, "A Catholic priest and

missionary among the Indians." He smiled, probably at the presumptuousness of the idea, but there was something impressive in his voice when, looking down at me, he said: "I am very glad you have such an intention." Of course I felt sure of being on the right path, since Mr. Longfellow had given his approval. Later on I decided that it would be better to be a Trappist monk than an Indian missionary.

"That's all," as we used to say at the end of our confessions — how short they were! — to dear old Father Strain — another "Father Felician."

You see I am not entitled to rank among converts to the Church, I am not an Indian missionary or a Trappist; but I am, with best wishes for the success of your book, which should do a world of good,

Very truly yours in Christ,
DANIEL E. HUDSON, C.S.C.

THE REV. EDWARD JOSEPH JEWELL, A.B., B.D.,

BAY CITY, MICHIGAN.

Priest of the Diocese of Grand Rapids; late Rector of Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, Manistee, Michigan.

The soul in its ignorance, searching for Truth lays hold of so many notions that when truth is finally attained, it is difficult to sort out from the vast heap of ideas, those which have had special importance in the process. Having groped its way through a labyrinth of darkness, it scarcely could be expected to remember clearly the various directions it took before coming to the light. The most, therefore, that such a history would contain, would be certain prominent facts which seem to stand out clearly, but which, nevertheless, may not have been the true causes of the conversion.

The chief cause is God's grace; the instrumental causes no one can possibly determine. Only the personal experiences can be set down, incidents that appear to have a bearing; while interpretations of them may entirely differ: so that, what appears to one to have been a prominent factor in conversion, to another may seem totally irrelevant, inefficient, and altogether inadequate.

To me the Church seems to be the instrumental

cause of conversion, as it is of salvation, so that every point of contact with it is to be regarded as of greatest moment.

To those rare occasions of contact I shall confine myself for the most part. To my youthful mind the Catholic Church was presented as "a monster of so frightful a mien, that to be hated needs but to be seen." The alphabet of my bugaboo book was Antichrist, Belial, Catholic, Democrat; my three R's, Rum, Romanism, and Rebellion. The former I got from Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* where the Pope was represented as a fearful ogre at the mouth of his cave, surrounded by heaps of bones of Christians; the latter, I got from fiery politicians.

My first knowledge of Catholics came when a dear schoolmate died, when I learned to my great surprise that he was a Catholic and that the priest would bury him. Fear kept me on the extreme edge of the crowd at the cemetery, but even there the chanting nearly froze me with terror. Since, however, the ground did not open to swallow me up, I was sufficiently reassured to be able to accept an invitation a few months later to accompany another Catholic playmate to his catechism for one or two Sundays. There I was so kindly received and so much complimented on my knowledge of the Scriptures that from that time onward Catholics ceased to be such objects of terror, although I still looked upon them with suspicion. Of course I felt obliged to conceal my feelings from my Protestant

friends. I believe that I never even ventured to tell my sisters where I had been, knowing what terror I had previously caused them by my hardihood in killing rattlesnakes. They always insisted that I was too venturesome. Alas! they probably think so now.

The *Schoenberg Cotta Family* and a life of Martin Luther were the chief sources from which I derived my terror of Catholicism, since they represented the Catholic Church as alone guilty of religious persecution. The Sunday-School library was mainly a collection of fictitious conversions from Catholicism, full of most absurd misrepresentations and caricatures of the doctrines, and charges of fearful immorality against the clergy and sisters, which Protestant school histories seemed to confirm. The Protestants published lectures by renegade priests and sisters, in pamphlet form, scattering these infamous libels broadcast among the young, regardless of the pernicious effect on their morals.

The natural result of such exaggeration was a reaction in favor of Catholicity so soon as my acquaintance with Catholics revealed their virtues. It tended to destroy my confidence in Protestant authorities, and to make me desire further information regarding the Catholic Church from its own representatives, so that I might be better able to defend it which I was always most eager to do.

I made several ventures in my childhood to receive instruction from Catholics but was gently re-

fused as soon as it was known that my parents were Protestant and had not been asked to give their consent. To my timid mind such a request seemed utterly hopeless.

About this time the newspapers published the prayers which were found among the effects of the Prince Imperial of France, when he was slain by the Zulus. These prayers memorized, and uttered in times of depression in the solitude of Californian hills were a source of great comfort to me, and formed my taste for a liturgical worship. Some years later, in the High School days in Michigan, it was my good fortune to enter an Episcopal church and hear a liturgical service which reminded me so pleasantly of my slight Catholic experience that I was moved to study the Book of Common Prayer and seek instruction. So great was my joy in finding myself a Catholic, as I supposed, without the stigma of the name, that my zeal obtained for me permission to study for Orders in that Church. Scarcely had my college work begun, before I met a former schoolmate whose father had cast him off because of his conversion to the Catholic Church. The sacrifices he had had to make, but the joy his faith gave him, made so great an impression on me that I began to feel there was still something that must be considered before I should be certain of my own Catholicity. I had found a liturgy, a worship that was full of dignity, worthy to be offered to an Omnipotent God. I do not exaggerate when I say

that its beauty so entranced me that I would gladly have spent the whole day in public worship; but this man had found a religion for daily life, a religion which supported and sustained him under daily suffering, poverty and loneliness. He showed me the secret of his endurance — a Rosary! He told me about Our Lady of Sorrows, of the martyrs sustained by her intercession. Here was grace indeed in abundance, grace sufficient for a lifetime of martyrdom. Had I such grace?

Sometimes in my long vacations I met priests and secretly wished that they would talk to me about the real difference between Anglicanism and Romanism, still I never ventured to ask for information but once, when unusually depressed and anxious. Again I was given a Rosary with the assurance that I should find the light by persevering prayer. I received not a word of instruction, not a hint of an invitation to leave my Church for the Catholic; only advice to pray for light through the Blessed Virgin Mary. But this was given so kindly and with such perfect assurance that I would find it all that was necessary, that I went away in wonder, but sufficiently impressed to follow the advice. Unfortunately however, my instruction in Catholic doctrines was too slight to make me appreciate the virtue of prayers to the Saints, hence the use of the Rosary was frequently omitted.

At college, Mr. J——, a brilliant student, often discussed the "Roman Claims" with me during the

long vacation, frequently urging me to go with him to Father McManus for instruction. He had not the courage to go alone and I could not muster up courage to go with him. We had both felt that we would be happier in the Roman Church, receive more grace, and be more comfortable because of the certainty that we were in the real Catholic Church; but we had no means of knowing for a surety what we would find on the other side. We had no friends who had taken the step and thus had no knowledge of the kind of reception we would receive there. The sacrifices to be made, the unknown disappointments awaiting us, and worst of all, the suspicions we still harbored against the priest — all conspired to hold us back. It was persistently asked "What becomes of converts to Rome? We never hear of them after they go over." The impression was fostered that Rome was suspicious of converts, kept them in obscurity, and prevented their communicating with friends, lest their unhappiness and dissatisfaction should become known. It was most mysterious. One could never make that voyage except with some tried and sympathetic companion, or some wise and experienced leader. Had we been there when Dr. James Kent Stone, a former President of our College (Hobart), went over, the step might have been easier. All the information we could gather concerning him confirmed our fears that the sacrifice would be too much for us. A few years later Dr.

P——, our College President, informed me that he crossed the Atlantic with my old friend Mr. J——, who was then wearing the Franciscan habit. Since I had received no news of his conversion and had never heard of him afterward, I was further impressed with the queer ways of Rome, aggrieved at his desertion, and forced to proceed alone in my search for truth.

Among the students at the seminary, I found many advanced Ritualists with whom I stifled my yearning for Catholic doctrine by reading books of ritualistic practices, and controversial tracts, designed to show that the Anglican Church was in complete accord with the "other" branches of the true Church and therefore Catholic.

The "Five Points of Ritual" seemed then the essential elements of true worship which it would henceforth be our duty to teach and enforce upon the unhappy, unwilling congregations to which we should be called. If that much to be desired and highly essential "Five Points" should generally prevail, we felt quite certain that the church could be recognized as Catholic. Unhappily for my sanguine hopes, I went to Europe for a year, where I had the Catholic Church presented to me in quite a different light from what my imagination had pictured her to be. In her I soon felt at home though still vainly imagining myself a Catholic. About this time I became convinced that far more was needed than ritual; the vital influence of Catho-

licity upon the lives of her children impressed me. I learned of miracles, and the supernatural lives of present-day Saints, and I saw the practices and the methods of the Church which appealed to me as most practical. I made an inward resolve to adopt them in my parish; my people at least should be Catholics no matter what the rest of the Church might be. I reasoned that the Anglican Church was or should be, one in doctrine, that our branch, if true, was entitled to all the doctrines and practices of the Church Universal, and no one had the right to prevent me from teaching whatever I was convinced was truth that the Roman Church taught. My only limitation was my ignorance of Catholic theology and my policy of "expediency," a common Protestant Episcopal affliction. I regarded my flock as babes to be "fed with milk" until able to bear "strong meat." This policy was a strong factor in bringing me into the Church, owing to the difficulties I experienced in carrying it out.

For the second time, this time at the General Theological Seminary, the conversion of two student friends to the Catholic Church gave me a feeling of awe and envy, the former because the mystery into which they disappeared seemed too deep for me to penetrate, the latter because I felt convinced that they were receiving more grace than I hoped to attain in the Episcopal Church. The secrecy with which their instructions had been carried on, their reticence about their plans (for no one

knew of their intentions till the daily papers announced their departure from the Seminary and reception into the Catholic Church), impressed us most unfavorably. The coterie of Ritualists to which they and I had belonged, continued a course of reading and criticism of Newman's *Apologia pro vita sua,* and of Father Faber's books, with additional prejudices against their conclusions. The *Life and Letters of Father Faber* seemed almost convincing, but just where we had hoped for a clear revelation of his ultimate reasons for giving up his former religious belief and accepting the Roman faith, it became vague and misty to us. The reasons of both men seemed insufficient, and did not convince our intellects, beclouded as they were with Anglican prejudices. Faber's "*Growth in Holiness,*" however, became my text-book for daily meditation, as his life in his English parish was my model.

Three years of struggle in my little mission at Petoskey con inced me of the impossibility of realizing my ideal, although my little flock accepted most cheerfully the new Anglo-Catholic doctrines. I taught, and allowed the introduction of a few Catholic practices. The Bishops' Pastorial issued at Minneapolis that year, and worse still, their utterances in that General Convention, so disturbed my people that further advance seemed impossible. Their pastor wished them to go to confession, their bishops opposed the practice. Where was the au-

thority in the Church to settle the dispute? This was only one of many difficulties. When they appealed to me for my authority to teach in opposition to my superiors I had no satisfactory answer. In Rome I felt there was uniformity and unity, springing from Infallibility.

After notifying my Bishop of my intention to enter the Catholic Church I went to a priest for instructions, which loyalty to my own church had previously prevented me from seeking. The good priest counseled delay until my mind should be more fully made up. He had no means of knowing how long I had struggled and how fully determined I was to make the great sacrifice which the step involved. His uncertainty and unwillingness to let me go on at once, gave me some doubts as to my own intentions and also as to my own wisdom and good judgment; so that when my Bishop's answer came in the shape of a request to consult men of my own party before taking a step involving the great and eternal interests of myself and my people; urging it on the ground that I had been isolated from my friends so long that I had perhaps been led to take a morbid view of the situation, which they could clear up for me better than he could, I decided to wait.

Resigning my work I entered the Western Theological Seminary in Chicago to investigate the claims of Papal Infallibility, from the Anglican standpoint; that is, to read the arguments which the ablest An-

glican writers could bring against the Papal claims, and to listen to the strongest reasons why I should not enter the Catholic Church. The natural result was that I returned to my work in the Episcopal Church persuaded that Infallibility nowhere existed and that the evils of a house divided against itself had to be endured. By great sacrifices I hoped to obtain the same results and rewards that my fellow laborers, the clergy of the Roman Church obtained. The excellent priests whom I had frequently met and the pious laymen of their flocks refrained from criticism; but, on the other hand by praising my work, and by numerous kindly acts they confirmed me in the delusion that I was helping along the Catholic cause, and was practically one of themselves. Their kindness, so well meant, proved a hindrance rather than a help in my search for truth. The first shock came when a parishioner reported a conversation with a priest in which the Father stated very positively his conviction that our Orders and Sacraments were *nil*, and all our sacrifices in vain, however closely we might imitate Catholics in faith and practice.

The conviction then again gradually took shape in my mind that infallibility was necessary to the existence of the Church and could exist nowhere but in Rome. The arguments of Anglicans against Papal Infallibility either proved those claims or proved too much. One champion after another was discredited by the ablest Anglican historians

themselves, until my confidence in authorities was confined to that very small coterie of men calling themselves the "Anglo-Roman party."

Three years of study and controversy over the tenability of their claims convinced me that belief in Papal Supremacy necessitated actual, not imagined, submission to the Pope. Certain propositions of Cardinal Manning upon this matter, which I read in Purcell's *Life of Manning*, proved unanswerable by the parties to whom I referred them. All my advisers thereupon, both Anglican and Catholic, agreed that I should go into retreat until it should become clear to me what God was calling me to do.

The year before I reached this conclusion I had resigned parish work to try my vocation in an Anglican Religious Order. For more than a year I had wished to enter the Order hoping thereby to quiet my unrest which I felt might be caused by resisting a call to a religious life. My difficulty in providing for my people a pastor who held my Anglo-Roman views and who would continue my teaching and ritual, was at length overcome. I found a minister (now a Catholic), who wished a change and who also believed in the Papal Supremacy. We traded parishes for a month, both resigning at the same time, he accepting the one I resigned. I declined a most pressing invitation to continue parish work in New Hampshire so that I might devote myself entirely to the work of the

Order, whose avowed aim was to bring back to the fold of Peter the strayed sheep of the Anglican Church.

Life in the Friary was exceedingly agreeable in spite of the heroic penances, poverty, and strenuous life we led; for two ministers and a lay brother did all the work of cutting wood, cooking, washing, gardening, caring for three orphan boys under ten years, besides publishing a monthly magazine, saying daily mass and breviary offices, teaching the school, preaching on the highways, and in the little church, catechising, and visiting the sick in the country for miles around. The incessant activity prevented "morbid introspection" to such an extent that I had no difficulty in putting away the "temptation of the devil" which my spiritual director called my interior call to make my submission to Rome. He asked me during my retreat if I had made every sacrifice which God had asked of me. I replied "All but one." That one seemed to me far greater than any I had yet made; for it was actual submission to the Holy Father, which I felt God was calling me to make. Nevertheless, in absolute obedience to my adviser and superior, I put it away as a "temptation of the devil."

My final undoing came when he sent me out to supply a vacant parish during Lent. I saw the actual state of things in the Church to be very different from what our imagination had pictured it. Hope being father to the thought, we had per-

suaded ourselves that the tide of the Oxford Movement was upward, which meant a purging out of the Protestant leaven from the Church of England, thus fitting her for corporate reunion with Rome which was, we were told, the "*terminus ad quem*" of the Movement. Instead of this, I found that many parishes in Massachusetts which had formerly been Ritualistic were now quite given over to the Broad Churchmen, and I heard tale after tale of discouraged Ritualists acknowledging defeat all along the line. While the "Movement" was on the rise it seemed that the Holy Ghost was surely bringing the wandering flock home and blessing our sacrifices and labors; and therefore we were bound not to give up the ship. Providence would care for our souls while we faithfully labored to bring others home. I found the ship a wreck, fast going to pieces.

The question of jurisdiction: What right had Anglicans to exercise priestly powers, supposing they *had* valid Orders, became an urgent one. The Holy Father had declared our Orders invalid, was his decision *ex-cathedra?* If not it might be reversed. But, jurisdiction being derived from him, alone, dare I, acknowledging his supremacy, exercise my Orders? Only *in extremis!* Were all Anglicans to be considered *in extremis?* My spiritual adviser compared the English Church to the "man who fell among thieves" who robbed and beat her during the period of the Reformation leav-

ing her "half-dead," therefore all Anglicans were "*in extremis.*" *Ergo!*

This was the rankest rationalism, individualism, and private interpretation of Scripture, history, the Fathers and Councils, surpassing the Protestantism of all the Protestants of every sect. I lost faith in my last authority in the Anglican communion, and thereupon decided to go into a retreat at some Catholic institution.

The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius did for me in eight days what the studies of twenty years had failed to do. To them I feel that I owe that peace and perfect assurance which the Catholic Religion alone and infallibly gives to man. As an Anglican the study of the Exercises had often provided food for meditation and subjects for mission preaching, but "making the Exercises" under the direction of the Sons of St. Ignatius was a wonderful revelation of their power. Before the retreat I rashly asserted that I would take no step until I was absolutely certain, my mind then being full of doubts and fears. When the retreat was over I had received the priceless gift of divine faith, with the courage to undertake any and all things for Him, Who had brought my soul out of darkness into His marvelous light.

In the hope that some timid and wavering soul may be encouraged to make the venture, I would add that it is not really difficult — the joy of homecoming is so great, the welcome so hearty that the sacrifices seem nothing in comparison.

"K"

MEMBER OF A RELIGIOUS ORDER IN THE UNITED STATES

"I fled Him down the nights and down the days;
I fled Him down the arches of the years;
I fled Him down the labyrinthine ways
Of my own mind; and in the mist of tears
I hid from Him, and under running laughter
Up vistaed hopes I sped,
And shot, precipitated
Adown Titanic glooms of chasmed fears,
From those strong Feet that followed, followed after.
But with unhurrying chase,
And unperturbéd pace,
Deliberate speed, majestic instancy,
They beat . . ."

It is the story of such a chase, the Footprints of the Divine Hunter of souls we are about to follow. Those patient Feet trod far afield to find the prey, "strange, piteous, futile thing" though it seem in all eyes save His, the Divine Lover of souls.

The subject of this sketch was born in one of the loveliest of the West Indian Islands. Never did existence seem more strongly fenced about and guarded from any inroad of the supernatural, above all, from any Catholic influence. K's father was a clergyman of the strict Evangelical school, a man of high integrity and of strong convictions, who

had given up his commission in the Royal Navy, with great hopes of promotion, to become a missionary in the West Indies. Her mother was one of those rare souls, naturally Catholic, who seem to have escaped the taint of Adam's sin, and live ideal lives in favor with God and man.

K's father, never spoke to her about religion. He inspired her with awe when, vested in his Geneva gown, to which he held tenaciously as a protest against Ritualism and Popery, he preached long and learned sermons, of which the child understood not one word. But out of the pulpit, when he read aloud in his wonderfully musical voice the masterpieces of English literature; or again, when he rode, generally at a gallop, with his yellow hair blown back and his grey eyes shining; or again, when perched on his shoulder, she followed with her eyes the finger that pointed out to her the glories of the tropic sky and taught her the names of the stars and their places, then and always, he was her idolized father.

Religious observances were strictly held to in this household, where eleven olive branches clustered around the parent stem. When at 9 p. m. precisely, the bell sounded, all, servants included, were required to file in solemnly to night prayers; and in the morning, in addition to the reading of a chapter from the Bible, each child had to recite a text from the Holy Scripture, and woe to the lazy one who repeated the same verse too often!

Thus whole chapters of the Old and New Testaments were learned by heart, and proved a spiritual treasure in after life.

Church going was a rare and exciting adventure. None but the privileged few who had been good all the week were allowed to take part in it. The church was seven miles distant, over mountainous roads, and the family wagonette, though of generous dimensions, held only a limited number. What mingled joy and terror it was to the elect when the horses "gibbed," going up a steep hill, or when the black postillion was shot suddenly over the head of an obstreperous mule. Then it was so amusing to watch the smiling negroes in their clean, bright-colored cotton frocks and stiff turbans, carrying their shoes in their hands until they came in sight of the church, when they were gravely assumed as part of the ceremony, to which they added solemnity by their sonorous squeak.

"The Sacrament" was administered after the morning service, during which time the younger members of the congregation enjoyed a picnic lunch under the mango trees. It was indeed a gala time, especially as this was the unique opportunity for meeting friends and distant neighbors, whose carriages and riding horses formed a picturesque group around the little church. The white congregation was small, and the service of the simplest, but it was all very delightful and amusing to the little

girl, who, it must be admitted, had few ideas of piety in connection with the scene.

When she was seven years old, her godfather and godmother each had the inspiration to present her with a copy of the Holy Scriptures, so K. found herself the proud possessor of three Bibles. Two she relinquished to less favoured members of the family; the third, a chubby little Bible with a soft Russia leather cover and flapping edges, was the joy of her heart, and became her "vade mecum." How she loved to read for herself the beautiful stories, first heard at her mother's knee. How she sympathized with Esau, and wept over poor Joseph and his wicked brothers, and delighted in the Gospel narrative! From this time the music of the English Bible was woven into the very tissues of her mind. To her it was all infallibly true, though her interpretations of the sacred text were no doubt singular enough. One day her mother found her pensive over her favorite Book of "Revelations." She was intensely anxious to know what that song was about, that only the Virgins who followed the Lamb could sing. Great was her disappointment when her mother said she did not know.

But perhaps the greatest teacher of God to the little opening soul at this time was the sea. She was born with the murmur of its mighty voice in her ears. That sound and the scarlet glare of the poinsettia bush outside the nursery window, were

the child's first conscious sense-perceptions. As soon as she was old enough, she loved to break away from the merry band of brothers and sisters, and lying as near as she dared to the wall of rock that rose in three gigantic steps from the shore, listen to the solemn roar of the breakers hundreds of feet below. It was indeed a wonderful scene, like one in a fairy pantomime or a fancy picture. The white, precipitous volcanic rock was all alive with gorgeous tropic vegetation. Dozens of "century plants" shot up their golden spires of blossom above the dense undergrowth of cactus and trumpet vine, palm and wild coffee berry. The scent of the night-blooming Sirius and of a thousand strange orchids and gorgeous flowers was heavy on the air. In front, like a vast curtain, hung the wonder of the sea, ever changing, yet ever the same, now flecked with "white horses" wrathful and plunging, now still as a painted ocean, with here and there a sail, or the flash of a shark's fin, or the wake of a diving manatee . . . and sometimes in the late, warm evening, when the tropic moon sent a path of silver across the field of wonderful blue, the child would watch breathlessly, half expecting to see Him of whom she had read in her favorite Gospel story, come walking down that path towards her.

It must be owned, however, that these thoughtful moments were comparatively rare. The little girl had all the faults of her age: she was passionately fond of play; wild, out door games, riding on horse-

back, climbing the highest trees and the steepest rocks were her chief delight. It was an ideal life for a child; a good library in which she browsed freely under her father's judicious eye sufficed for training of the mind. Story-books were few but choice, and a taste for good reading came as it were, by instinct. But we are anticipating.

K. was only seven when she had to say good-bye to the sea and the lovely, wild country, for a little inland town of which her father was appointed Rector. It was a real grief; but she soon learned to love the beautiful Rectory, with its orange trees and huge Spanish chestnuts, and the companionship of other children added to the family pleasures.

This happy time was not to last long. At the age of twelve she lost her beloved father, still in the prime of life. It was the first shock of a deep and lasting sorrow, and K's childish heart was secretly wrung by the thought that her father would never know how much she loved him, how sorry she was for her tempers and naughtiness. It was her first realization of death . . . of the effects of sin and sorrow, the bitter sense of the irremediable in life. Her heart clung in a passion of tenderness to her mother in her grief. That mother became more than ever the centre and idol of the home. The family returned to the old house by the sea, but all was changed. The song of the waves was sadder now, and soon a serious accident crippled the little girl; for four years she was unable to walk.

It was a bitter trial to an ardent and active nature, and at the same time one of God's greatest hidden mercies. Perforce, the soul was turned inward. Prayer became more real, reading her sole occupation; she was a devourer of books, and it became a problem to keep her supplied; hence she read much that was beyond her years. A beloved elder sister had married an Anglican clergyman of the extreme High Church party. Lately come from Oxford, he was full of the movement that had shaken the Church of England to its foundations when Newman left it. He still clung to the "Church of his baptism" but unconsciously he was giving a new turn to the thoughts of his young sister-in-law. High Church Manuels, Hymns Ancient and Modern, and a somewhat mutilated copy of the *Imitation of Christ*, became the treasures of the young girl. Above all, the reading of Newman's "*Apologia*" was a revelation to her. "*Westward Ho*" and the "*Greek Heroes*" had been prime favorites of early days, and it was a real shock to have the ideal image of Charles Kingsley shattered by Newman's well-directed blows.

A saying of her father's had sunk deep into the girl's mind. "The Catholic laity," he would say, with calm conviction, "are kept in a state of such profound ignorance by their priests, that they no doubt believe the absurdities that are taught them; but the priests know better, and they maintain a system of fraud and falsity." After reading New-

man's "*Apologia*" this impression was so far modified as to admit that some, at least, among the teachers of that mysterious and dreaded Church are sincere in their belief and teaching.

K. was now 15, and there was talk of her making her first communion. To facilitate this, she went to visit two maiden aunts, then living near the dear old Rectory, which was now held by a clergyman of the strictest Evangelical type. He was considered to be the very man to win a foolish girl from certain erroneous tendencies which had been remarked with pain by her anxious relatives, so he was requested to instruct this wandering sheep as to what she was *not* going to receive in Communion.

It was with a certain tremor that at the hour appointed, K saw the neat carriage of the Rector drive up, and she was summoned to the interview. After a long and learned discourse on grace and predestination, the reverend gentleman asked: "What do you expect to receive in Communion?"

"The Body and Blood of Jesus Christ," answered K. with great decision. The horror of the Evangelical minister may be better imagined than described. He wished to know where the child had learned this Popish doctrine. "Why, here in the Bible; it is quite plain," answered K. Discussion and warning were in vain; K. held to her hereditary right of private judgment and interpretation of Scripture, and after a long exhortation, she

was told that she might go to the Lord's Supper on the following Sunday if she wished to do so *on her own responsibility!*

Secretly somewhat daunted and shaken, and keenly distressed and troubled, K. prayed and fasted in preparation for this day for which she had longed with such intensity, but which was now clouded with doubts and uncertainties. On that Sunday morning, still fasting, though the service was at eleven, K. waited with trembling hope and anxious fear, the moment which was, in her mind, to decide whether He was really there or not. . . . Kneeling at the railing, she instinctively opened her mouth to receive the bread. The clergyman thrust it into her hand with a sort of impatience, and then almost forced the cup to her lips. . . . It was with a feeling of bitter disappointment that K. went to her place in the high pew. . . . No! it could not be true. . . It was all a dream, a mistake. *That* could not be He!

It must be borne in mind that up to that time K. had never been in the Church when Communion was given, as it was the extreme Low Church custom to give the Sacrament after the non-communicants had left the church, which they did in a body after the sermon; neither had she ever heard or read of the Catholic usage in receiving Holy Communion.

The Ritualistic brother-in-law did all he could to console his neophyte by letter, telling her that the

intention of the celebrant was everything, and inviting her to his house, where she could profit of his ministry. The invitation was gladly accepted, but the sense of void and disillusion remained. . . . No, alas! . . . *He was not there!* . . . that was the great grief.

About this time K had a very singular dream which affected her strangely. Without giving it any undue importance, it is impossible to omit it altogether in the story of the soul upon which it left a very deep impression. She dreamt, (it was a sort of half-waking dream, but intensely vivid) that she was in a vast ball-room, full of light and laughter and music, she the gayest of the dancers there. All at once, above the sound of the band, not louder, but different in tone and quite apart and unmingled with it, came another strain of music, inexpressibly sweet and solemn, such as she had never heard before.

She sought with her eyes whence it came, and there, at the end of the hall, she saw an opening in the wall, and beyond a dark alcove or chapel. Something irresistible drew her towards it, though it seemed that all her companions strove to hold her back. She broke from them and ran towards the spot whence the music came. . . . All the light in the ball-room seemed to vanish suddenly, and she was alone in the chapel. A faint light fell on something there, something that she had never seen before. . . a great life-size Crucifix. It seemed to draw her towards it, and as she knelt in wonder and

awe, the Head was raised, and the Eyes looked deep into her own — one look which she never forgot. Then all was dark, and she found herself in a path leading she knew not whither. She felt inexpressibly lonely, yet not *alone*. There was a sense of some unseen Presence near her. . . . For ages, as it seemed in the dream, she walked on thus up the steep and narrow way, weeping, sore, and very sad and weary. At last she came to a high plateau of rock. Above was the light of stars, and seven great splendid globes of light that revolved slowly and majestically in the heavens. Then on a sudden, a blinding light and scorching heat surrounded her, a Voice called her by a *new name*, and she turned to see at her side Him whom she had beheld upon the Cross, looking at her again with love and pity. . . This was the dream. I know not all it meant.

Shortly after, the whole family went "home" to England. No tie now bound them to the West Indies, and England had been the long-dreamed-of land of promise to K. She little thought however, what graces and what sorrows awaited her there.

They settled down in a little Midland town, where there was a fine grammar school for the younger boys, whose education had been the chief motive for the change of country. All in her new surroundings was delightful to K. She was in ecstasies at seeing snow for the first time, and the

beauty of an English Spring was a kind of new revelation. Her first vision of a bank of primroses in the M. . . vale woods brought her to her knees with a keen sense of the Presence of God.

But a new danger awaited her soul. Minds in that large family were developing in widely different directions, and new ideas and impressions poured in at every sense. Darwin, Huxley, and Herbert Spencer were eagerly read, and faith, with no solid foundation to rest on, was soon lost. There came a day when the only prayer that rose to agonized lips was that of the Agnostic: "O God (if there is a God), save my soul (if I have a soul)."

But one safe-guard remained in the love of the mother, whose simple faith and charity to the poor and to all, brought blessings upon her unworthy child. Then came a black day, when that adored mother was stricken with a grievous illness, one that could only end in death, after long torture. It would be impossible to describe the rage of grief and despair that took possession of K.'s soul: God was not just, or He cared nothing about His poor suffering creatures. Why must the holy, the gentle, the loving and so well-beloved, suffer so? The thought of losing her was despair — to see her suffer without hope of cure or relief was maddening.

It was in this mood that one day she heard a friend say casually: "Why don't you go to Benediction at the Convent? It is not five minutes' walk and the nuns sing so beautifully!" K. had often

passed the high grey wall of the Benedictine Priory with a sort of shudder. What kind of life did those poor women lead, shut up in that dismal prison? The mere thought of it was dreadful; but in her present mood any diversion of mind from the one, hopeless sorrow was welcomed. K. never left her mother now for more than an hour at a time, but the Convent was only at the end of the grounds. Information as to the hours of Benediction was eagerly given by a little Catholic maid, and one memorable evening in May, K. pushed aside the little wicket gate that led to the side door of the chapel.

It was open and K. found herself in a very small sacristy. The sanctuary alone was visible, the rest of the chapel was hidden from secular eyes by a heavy curtain. The priest vested and passed out into the sanctuary, and there was a sound of music, an organ, and voices sweet and solemn . . . was she dreaming again? Was not that the very air she had heard in a dream years before? Then she looked towards the altar: a great light was streaming from the Tabernacle. . . *Who* was standing there? . . . Did she sleep or wake?

What had happened? . . . That is the Secret of the King . . . but when some time after, the priest touched her on the shoulder, and said it was time to close the door of the chapel, K. rose as from a dream. One thing was real, however, she

had found Him at last. . . He was there in that Tabernacle. There was no more room for the shadow of a doubt; she had seen, not with the eyes of flesh, but with a vision far clearer than that of bodily sight, Him, whom she had sought for so long, or rather, Him whose Footsteps had at last overtaken her after a long chase.

Strange to say, the idea of being actually received into the Catholic Church did not at once occur to her. . . It sufficed that she had found Him . . . that from time to time she could slip away from her mother's bedside to the little sanctuary, where she was sure to find rest and consolation in His dear Presence.

Meanwhile her mother became daily worse; the care of the dear invalid was a privilege jealously guarded and yielded to none, night or day. One of K's sisters, the wife of an Anglican clergyman, came at this time to share her sorrow. These were days of sadness: it was anguish to witness the sufferings of one so dear, without hope of even alleviating the cruel pain. Unknown to each, the two sisters had been travelling along different roads to the same goal. Mrs. M. had long felt that the Anglican communion did not satisfy the needs of her soul. All was unreal to her, and at the touch of a great sorrow she found she had nothing to lean upon, no faith, no love strong enough to enable her to bear the trial.

At first K. said nothing of her own state of mind

with regard to religion; but one day she said suddenly, "Come with me to Benediction."

"What is Benediction?" asked Mrs. M.

"Come and see!"

If, thought K., she is moved as I was, I shall take it as a sign that I must become a Catholic, whatever it costs. So they went together, and as they left the chapel, her sister said: "K., if there is Truth anywhere, it is there."

"I know it," said K., "for *He* is there."

From that time they said little to each other of the subject which absorbed their thoughts, but every Benediction day found them in the little chapel. At last, one day, the Convent servant stopped them as they were going in, saying that the nuns had decided to admit no one to their chapel, as some visitors had abused the privilege, drawing aside the curtain to satisfy their curiosity to see cloistered nuns. This was a great blow; where now should they find consolation? It was not to be borne; a letter was soon dispatched to the Chaplain, whose name was unknown to them, imploring his intercession on their behalf with the Mother Prioress, since in great sorrow, they found their only comfort in kneeling for a few moments in that dear sanctuary. A kind and cordial response soon arrived, saying that the prohibition was not for them, and that the little door would be left open, so that they might enter when they pleased.

So every day the sisters knelt before a Hidden

God, whom, though as yet not fully known, they loved. One evening, after Benediction, the priest stopped them, and after a few kind words, asked them why they, being Anglicans, left their own beautiful church to come to this little chapel.

"Because," said K. very simply, "He is not there, He is here." This was the first of many conversations, which finally developed into a regular course of instruction. Many Catholic books were eagerly devoured; the light was now fully given, but to follow it meant to both the sacrifice of all that was dearest and sweetest in life.

It would be impossible to enter into the details of what followed. God took to Himself the beloved mother, whose simple faith and love had won for her children a greater grace than in His hidden decrees He had willed to bestow upon her in this life. The two sisters received conditional Baptism and made their first Communion in the same dear chapel where already such marvelous graces had been given them.

"Quid retribuam Domino?" This is the imperative cry of gratitude that springs spontaneously to the lips of one who has been specially favoured by God. Nothing less than all would suffice in return for the supreme gift of faith. K. reached the haven of the religious life, after many trials and difficulties. There we will leave her. "Blessed is the country that has no history," and the soul whose life is hidden with Christ in God.

Her sister persevered heroically in the midst of extraordinary trials and difficulties, and finally drew her husband and children after her into the Church. Theirs has been ever since the long martyrdom of poverty and friendlessness suffered for the faith. "*Elegi abjectus esse,*" must be the watchword of the Anglican clergyman, who, no longer a young man, and with a wife and family dependent upon him, finds himself as it were, adrift on the shores of a new world, whose inhabitants regard him, some with indifference, others with distrust. Truly, as a distinguished convert clergyman said of himself, with regard to temporal matters, he must live suspended by the hair of his head, like the prophet Habacuc!

Before the last parting, the sisters had some great consolations together. They were confirmed by Cardinal Manning in his private chapel in Westminster, and guided and instructed by the great sailor-monk, Bishop Ullathorne. They were blessed and consoled by the great and saintly Cardinal Newman, then in extreme old age, but still marvelously attractive by the power that sanctity, sweetness and humility gives. They assisted at his Mass in the old chapel of St. Philip Neri at the Birmingham Oratory, and saw him weep and tremble with love and heavenly joy as he held his Lord in his hands.

In the last, never-to-be-forgotten interview of farewell, how eagerly they treasured up every word, every sound, of that wonderful voice, the gaze of

those clear, childlike blue eyes, that seemed to say to God: "for aught else I care not."

They saw him, Prince of the Church and the greatest man in England, giving them his precious time as if he had nothing else to do but strengthen and support the weak, and then he glided out of the room, and returned, carrying two volumes of his Anglican sermons, saying with that exquisite courtesy and urbanity, which are the fine flowers of humility: "I hope you will not mind taking these; I wrote them before I was a Catholic, but I don't think they will do you any harm!"

O beloved Father, scholar, sage and saint, pray for your spiritual children, to whom you opened the way to the City of Peace.

ADA MARY LIVINGSTON,

NEW YORK

Widow of Van Brugh Livingston, Esq., and daughter of the late Hon. Samuel Jaudon, United States Minister to England.

My first grace of conversion came, I think, from the prayers of the Three Kings, Gaspar, Melchior and Balthazer — for I was born on the feast of the Epiphany — January 6th., in London, England.

I was baptized of course, in the Established Church, but it was not until the death of my brother next oldest to myself, when I was twelve years old, that I had any thought of religion. This sorrow, and the teachings of a very pious Protestant governess made me completely change my mode of life, and I joined the Episcopal Church, was confirmed, and became a regular communicant till I was about twenty-three years old. At this time my eldest sister became engaged to the eldest brother of my husband of many years later, and this brought me into intimacy with the Catholic branch of the Livingston's. I resolved to show them their errors, and to this end I began to read and study their books in order to be able to prove how right I was, and how wrong they were. I was particularly anxious to bring back to Protestantism a cousin by marriage, then a recent convert.

For many months I pored over my Concordance, Bible and Catholic doctrinal works till the blessed light dawned upon me, and I knew that God had established a Church, and that to it He had promised immunity from error. And furthermore I found that to this Church He had promised to confide all Truth and to abide with it forever.

This was enough to make me decline further communion in the Episcopal Church. Nor, as I have frequently known to be the case, did our clergyman trouble himself about this, or try to lead me back to Episcopalianism.

My mother's distress wrung from me the promise not to read or speak about religion for six months, but at the expiration of that time I went off to the Catholic church to Mass. Seeing me so determined my dear mother thinking to frighten me from taking the step said I should be sent away to a Protestant clergyman in Baltimore, or shut up in our country home for the winter, with only Protestant servants and that my dear father's death would surely result from my joining the Catholic Church — that Church from which his forefathers, Huguenots from La Rochelle in France, had fled to this country at the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. I persevered, however, and was baptized in the Paulist Church, New York, by Father Hewit on October 24th, 1863. In November, we, having no archbishop in New York since Archbishop Hughes' death, I was privately confirmed by Archbishop

Spalding of Baltimore in his parlor at the old New York hotel, a landmark which has long since vanished.

On the 18th of December I made my first blessed Communion in the chapel of the Sacred Heart on West 17th street. It too has passed away in the rush and pressure of New York business and progress.

Years went on — society years — when, however, I was never quite satisfied with the worldly life, sighing for a more secluded one, though from my earliest conversion I was a weekly, and often more frequent communicant — and then — after a time — a daily partaker of the Sacrament, devoting all my spare time to the care of the Altar of the Paulist church, and making vestments and altar linens.

In November, 1874 I was married to Van Brugh Livingston, and again went abroad (I had been on a visit to England and France some years previous).

My husband and I remained three years abroad, visiting almost every country of Europe, and of course were one winter in Rome where we enjoyed exceptional religious privileges. Soon after our return to America my dear mother passed away; then my beloved sister, Annie Livingston, my second sister Julia Van Rensselaer, and my two brothers also died.

Through all these losses I had the consolation of our beloved Faith, the devotion of my saintly hus-

band, our union of heart and soul, daily strengthened and spiritualized by Holy Mass, and the daily Communion of the most Precious Body and Blood of our dear Lord.

There followed a time of calm after many storms until the day came when, after leading each year a more and more saintly life of prayer and union with God, my beloved husband also passed away to the blessed life with God for which he had been so long preparing. And now my final hope and prayer is that I may continue to live and then die in this ever blessed and holy Faith.

If I have chiefly sketched here the manner and mode of my life after, instead of before my conversion, it is in order that all men may know the blessing it has been to me from the first day until now — nearly forty-five years ago.

HUGH FRASER MACKINTOSH, ESQ.,

TORONTO, CANADA

My first impressions of the Catholic Church are not easy to define, dating back as they do to a very early age. But, born and brought up in the Presbyterian sect, I had no opportunity in my youth of imbibing correct notions as to what the Church really was or in what her children differed from other Christians save in that, as I was taught to believe, they adored images, put the Blessed Virgin before Christ, the Church above the Bible, and, in other respects, "had departed from the primitive gospel." Further, I was taught, less by oral instruction than through the medium of printed books, that where the Catholic Church had exercised power it had been as an instrument of oppression, and that the "blessed Reformation" had been effected only through seas of blood and by "the patient endurance of its martyrs." One book in particular from my father's library I recall as inculcating such teachings. Its title was: "Historical Tales for Young Protestants," and it painted in lurid colors the "fiendish cruelty" of Catholic prelates in dealing with these "zealous reformers of the faith." Of any corresponding persecution on the part of the "Reformers" it of course contained not a

word, and it was left to future years to reveal to me their unrivalled supremacy in this respect. My father was not openly opposed to the Catholic Church, and I cannot recall a single harsh expression from him against Catholics as such. I heard more of it in Sunday school than anywhere else and can remember, on one occasion at least, an ex-priest being brought there to address us. But while my father was not in the habit of expressing bitter feelings against Catholics (or for that matter against anyone), that he had the prevailing Protestant idea of the Church certain books in his library seemed to bear witness. He was, moreover, an ardent Presbyterian, a man of great faith and piety, well versed in the Scriptures, and had a firm grasp of the tenets of Calvinism which he very earnestly imparted to his children. We were well drilled in the theology of the "Westminster Confession of Faith" as embodied in the "Shorter Catechism," and in the metrical version of the Psalms as in use in the Church of Scotland — so thoroughly indeed that the lapse of years has not served to eradicate them from my memory.

There was, however, a coldness and formalism about the Presbyterian form of worship that never appealed to me either as a child or in more mature years. In this I imagine I did not differ materially from the generality of youths brought up in similar surroundings however they may have changed as they grew up. But (and this is the only aspect of

it with which I am concerned here) it was not an atmosphere conducive to the imbibing of Catholic principles, and a less promising starting point for a journey to Rome it would be hard to imagine — save, perhaps, in this, that the rugged staunchness and straightforwardness of the Scottish character gave to even so unlovely a thing as Calvinism a hatred of shams and hypocrisy which is, I should say, more promising at least than the pliancy of other and more emotional forms of heresy. Whence then, and in what manner, did I imbibe those thoughts and ideas which were to pave for me the way to the Catholic Church? I will endeavor to sketch them as briefly as possible.

I was a mere boy when I first saw the interior of a Catholic church and the occasion was one long to be remembered. A funeral service was in progress in the local church and, passing with other lads, attracted by the throng, we went in. I can recall at this distance of time the vested priests, the lights upon the altar, the smoke of the incense and the mournful chant of the *Dies Iræ*. The latter haunted me for days and while subsequent years have made it familiar, its solemn cadences on that occasion sound in my ears still.

It was not for some years that I again found myself in a Catholic church. This second occasion was a charity sermon by a preacher of some note and my elder brother and I were, with some reluctance, permitted to attend. Of the sermon I

remember nothing except a remark to the effect that almost the entire body of English literature is stained with error as regards the teachings and practices of the Church. That remark was not lost upon at least one of the auditors; for, later, it bred in me a spirit of enquiry. But what impressed me most was the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, neither the meaning nor import of which I had then the least conception; but which was to have such an effect upon me in after years. All that I then discerned was its beauty and solemnity, so unlike the empty forms to which I was accustomed. From that time on, for many years, I entered a Catholic church only at long intervals, but never I think save in a spirit of respectful attention to what, while not understood, was felt inwardly to be something more than an empty ceremony.

But the turning point in my life came in a manner entirely unlooked for. That Protestants had from time to time found their way into the Church of Rome I had of course heard, but the fact made no deep impression on my mind, as the notion that they were actuated by motives of a more or less worldly character was the natural inference derived from what I had been taught. Besides, such persons were for the most part clergymen of the Church of England, and, as I had heard my father remark, only a paper wall separated Anglicans from Catholics in any case. That was the old Covenanting idea of the Church of England and it never

occurred to us to call it in question. But a new world opened before me when, in the year 1882, I picked up a magazine of the day which had as a frontispiece a reproduction of Ouless's celebrated portrait of Cardinal Newman, and as I was examining it, a voice at my elbow, speaking of the article accompanying the portrait, asked: "Is it an apology for his becoming a Catholic?" I recall quite vividly the sensation this question produced in me. Of Cardinal Newman I, up to that time, knew nothing whatever; but I was fascinated at once by the deep spirituality of the face and the penetrating, far-away look as of one whose thoughts pierced the veil and centred in a higher sphere. Can this, I thought, be the face of a man who could lightly or for any unworthy motive make so momentous a change? I took the magazine into a quiet corner and read the article carefully from beginning to end. It treated of matters of which I in those days knew little or nothing. The writer was an unbeliever, but his attitude towards the Cardinal was one of deep reverence and of frank if restrained sympathy with his intellectual point of view. He wrote of Newman's early history and of the Evangelical atmosphere into which he was born; of his career at Oxford and the hard battle he there fought to place Anglican theology upon a firm intellectual basis, and then to vindicate the kinship of the Establishment with the Church of the first ages, independent of the modern Roman communion, which

claimed alone to represent historical Christianity; of his self-acknowledged failure so to do and of his humble submission to the all-conquering mother who had established in no uncertain terms her claim to his spiritual allegiance. Here was an intellectual history dominated wholly by spiritual aims: what could it all mean? Mr. C. Kegan Paul, the writer of the article, had, himself, been a clergyman of the establishment whose soul had revolted at the inconsistencies of that Erastian organization and had drifted into unbelief. The spiritual history of Newman appealed to him strongly, however, and his attitude in 1882 is thus summed up: "My interest is mainly intellectual, not doctrinal . . . but I feel that, granting the premises, Dr. Newman's church is the only logical outcome of them." His difficulty was with the fundamental principles underlying the Christian faith, but these, too, were in the course of years to be made plain to him, and when that time came I had the happiness of congratulating him upon his safe entry into that Port in which by God's mercy I had then been safely anchored for several years. And it was my privilege a few months ago to kneel at the little oratory erected by him in the church of the Servite Fathers in Fulham Road, London, and there to offer a prayer of thanksgiving for the Faith and for the repose of the soul of Kegan Paul.

I have dwelt upon this chapter in my experiences as it was to usher me into a course of enquiry which

had, to me, such momentous results. The *Apologia Pro Vita Sua* was repeatedly referred to in Mr. Paul's essay and so great was the interest it aroused in me that I lost no time in purchasing the book and therein reading Dr. Newman's own account of his change of faith. This is not the place to dwell upon that epoch-making book which has taken rank among the classics. I read it then with all the interest of a novice and when I finished it I had ceased to be a passive onlooker, and had become an earnest enquirer. I have read the book many times since then and always with fresh interest and delight, as I have in the course of years read about all that John Henry Newman has written, but nothing can ever duplicate the eager zeal with which, in the *Apologia,* I entered upon the undiscovered country.

I take it that I am not called upon here to vindicate the course or conclusion of my enquiries but rather to set down as briefly as possible the reasons which induced me to go out from my own people and to seek admission into the Catholic Church. I suppose no two converts have the same intellectual history, and God's dealing with the sons of men are as varied as they are beneficent. By devious paths, through dense forests or over sunny plains does the wanderer come home, and if my own pilgrimage was devoid of striking incidents its recital may nevertheless help some poor wayfarer who, with no chart to guide him, has lost his way.

As I read the history of Scotland, the land of my

ancestors, I was conscious of a feeling of wonder how a chivalrous and imaginative people like the Highland Celts could have fallen under the sway of so cheerless and so unlovely a creed as Calvinism. A deep mystery lies here, and I am no more able to fathom it now than I was then. The Church of God has won her way in the world by appealing to the higher instincts of humanity, and by the exercise of pastoral mildness in her ministrations to the poor and the downtrodden; but the path of heresy has ever been the path of blood. By base arts have nations been allured from their allegiance, or by fire and sword despoiled of their faith and thus become the victims of that "deep malady of heart and mind," as heresy has been very aptly termed. This is indeed the only hypothesis on which Protestantism can be explained, and while we lament the fact of its existence we can with the late Mr. Allies wish every form of it nothing worse than "self-wrought dissolution through the internal operation of the error on which they are founded — the generative principle of private judgment."

Reading, then, in this frame of mind, the romances of Sir Walter Scott, Jane Porter and others dealing with the heroic ages of Scottish history, it was borne in upon me that in breaking with her past Scotland had committed national suicide and given the lie to all that was most inspiring in her history. And, in the occasion and methods of that break, I was unable to discern anything that re-

dounded to her credit as a nation. It was begotten in iniquity and nurtured in treachery. The Catholic party stood for the national life of Scotland, while the Reformers played into the hands of Elizabeth and Cecil. So far then as Scotland was concerned the Reformation was her undoing. With Queen Mary, Cardinal Beatoun and those other heroic souls upon whose destruction the success of the new order depended, I had always had the deepest sympathy, and the more I pondered upon the infamous slanders that have been heaped upon them the greater became my contempt for their miserable traducers, and the more remote any possibility of my own permanent identification with the cause which the Calvinists represented. On the one hand I contrasted the known purity of Mary's early years, her courageous adherence to her faith in troublous times, her absolute selflessness in her relations with her friends and dependents, and, crowning all, her heroic death. On the other hand was the seething mass of corruption in which her lot was cast in the Calvinistic Scotland of the sixteenth century. Was ever a helpless and defenceless woman encompassed by so cruel, so cunning, so unprincipled a set of knaves? There is, apart from Mary's own personality and the unselfish devotion of her humbler retainers, scarcely a bright spot to relieve the dark background of the picture. And towering over all is the grim figure of John Knox, than whom history records few more despicable characters. Coward,

bully, traitor, apostate — applauding the murder of the patriot Cardinal and, without doubt privy to the deed; browbeating a gentle and refined woman whom the trend of events had placed at his mercy, and fleeing to Geneva to save his own precious skin when danger threatened in his native country — this is the man whom unthinking Presbyterians delight to honor. It has not been my good fortune to meet with one who could satisfactorily justify this man's dominance in the Scottish history of the period, far less his elevation to a species of patron-saintship, except that a hero a cause must have, and in the stress of poverty one is sometimes manufactured out of very questionable material. In the selection of John Knox, I concluded, the very worst elements in the great upheaval found their most signal triumph.

Whatever, then, might be the merits of Calvinism its genesis in Scotland had not the stamp of Heaven upon it and its founders nothing in common with the great Fathers of the Christian faith. Plunder was their object and calumny their stock in trade. Perish the thought that the pure and upright lives of my parents, and of others whom I knew, could have anything in common with these fanatical despoilers. Rather were they like sheep robbed of their shepherd yet hearkening to a voice that through the darkness of surrounding heresy led them on to the haven of rest beyond.

In the midst of such thoughts as these the subject

of Church authority was brought before me, and I came gradually to feel that between the Holy Scriptures, even in the mutilated King James version, and the doctrinal standards of the Church of Scotland as set forth in the "Westminster Confession of Faith" a great gulf was fixed. As I read the scriptural narrative, authority to teach unerringly was clearly committed to a body of men by our Lord Himself and power to bind and to loose was conferred upon them with the same definiteness as He had derived it from His Father. I found nothing to correspond with this in the Presbyterian standards, and the result was a state of perplexity of mind which gave me much concern and might have issued in total unbelief had not Providence opened to me the way to the Catholic Church.

Lastly, I was confronted in the years of which I speak with the majestic idea of the Real Presence. My dear father always bore a conspicuous part in the inner work of the Presbyterian sect and in my boyhood days, as ruling elder in the particular congregation to which as a family we were attached, had the custody of the vessels used in the communion service and the providing of the elements necessary on such occasions. This being so it follows that I had every opportunity of observing the celebration of this service among Presbyterians, although never participating in it, and I here bear witness to the solemn earnestness with which it was in those days observed. I do not know how it is

now but imagine that in this as in other things Presbyterianism has fallen under the sway of the less serious if more emotional Methodist type which seems now to dominate what is called Evangelical Christianity. The deep earnestness of the Scottish character preserved the national religion for three hundred years from becoming mere emotionalism, but within the past half century this barrier has broken down and long strides been taken away from the old dogmatic type which was formerly synonymous with the name of Scotsman. In the service I speak of the solemn words of consecration which to a Catholic mean so much, while uttered with a high degree of reverence symbolized only a *remembrance* of the Last Supper, not of course a sacrifice or any change in the elements. I cannot say that at that time I had any idea of a higher interpretation; but when later I met with the idea of the Real Presence as the natural and proper meaning of our Lord's words it furnished a key to ecclesiastical history which, without the light of that great truth, was hard and inexplicable. And this seems the proper place to say that, as I progressed, I was impressed by the fact that the Catholic interpretation of Scripture was invariably in keeping with the natural and obvious meaning of the text, while, in inverse ratio, the Protestant interpretation was forced and strained. I found, too, that the late Bishop Brownlow's maxim that when scripture is quoted against the Church the most effective retort

is usually to ask the disputant to read the next verse, is a sound one. I had myself been struck with the incongruity of our Lord in instituting this sacrament not meaning apparently what He said, and when gradually it dawned upon me that the great Catholic Church, existing from the beginning and alone teaching with the voice of authority, proclaimed that Christ really gave us His own Flesh and Blood, a definiteness and consistency was given to the sacred narrative which bore in upon me with irresistible force. I have read much on this subject both before and after I became a Catholic, and have come to consider the argument for the Catholic interpretation of the words of institution, apart altogether from the Divine character of her teaching, as simply irresistible. It was Cardinal Newman, however, who first brought me face to face with this sublime truth, and while as I have said I did not at once grasp the full import of it, a train of thought was opened to me which ere long subdued me completely and brought me to realize that the Catholic Church was my true home.

When then in the *Apologia*, the fair form of the everlasting Church burst upon my vision these thoughts of many years had produced in me a receptive mind and a temper to reverence and admire. I do not say that they had accompanied a life of prayer, or that, up to that time they had materially affected my life. On the contrary, I can look back upon those years only with regret and com-

punction, as years given up to the service of the world and with little or no thought of my eternal destiny. But if I had drifted far from my moorings the moorings themselves were unstable and were drifting further and further from the Rock upon which the Christian Church is built. We hear much in these days of a reunion of various forms of Protestantism, but any such reunion must be built upon the sacrifice of the cherished, if mistaken, convictions of former generations. This is indeed the one prevailing characteristic of all the sects: that what formerly were cherished as divine truths have now ceased to have any force or vitality and must not so much as be named among them. The dogma of a state of future retribution is a case in point. This elementary truth is no doubt held by a considerable number in private but is rarely heard of in public, and, like many other traditional beliefs, has gone down before the all-corroding intellect of man. Even belief in the Divinity of Christ is not immune from this overmastering tendency and no extraordinary qualities of penetration are necessary to discern in the near future, religion outside of the Catholic Church transformed into pure humanitarianism bent solely upon making the most of this world. Things have already advanced far in this direction and no human power can stem the torrent. But, as God has not deserted his people, out of this evil may come good, and as the years pass an increasing number of the more serious minded, appalled by the

impending destruction of all faith in the supernatural, find their way into the one Church whose builder and maker is God.

To sum up, then, my conversion was mainly effected by the contemplation of those two essential truths, the Divine authority of the Church and the Real Presence of the Body and Blood of Christ in the Holy Eucharist; two truths which satisfy the intellect and soothe the heart as only a Catholic can understand. They illustrated and typified and brought home to my innermost consciousness the living, breathing fact that God is ever with His people, leading them with outstretched hand through all the dangers and pitfalls of this earthly pilgrimage to their heavenly home. I have not dwelt upon other dogmas of the Faith all of which are of course equally true, and coalesce to form a beautiful and harmonious whole. The authority of the Church was the keystone of the arch and that being demonstrated, all else followed as a matter of course. Of the difficulties encountered in the course of my enquiries, many and various as they were, I am not called upon to deal with here. They arose altogether from misconceptions, such as are common to most converts, as did those stains on the imagination which, even after the intellect is satisfied, remain sometimes until actual experience within the Church effectually and forever dispel them. Suffice it to say that all difficulties gradually dissolved as I progressed and the nearer I drew to the Bride of

Christ the fairer she appeared. Auricular confession from being a stumbling block became a stepping stone and devotion to the Blessed Virgin and the Saints so far from derogating from the honor due to Our Lord, as in my ignorance I had believed, was found rather to foster and develep it. To that Blessed Lady the greatness of my debt only eternity can reveal. She, true to her mission, comforted me in my discouragements, supported me when I stumbled and raised me when I had fallen, drawing me nearer and nearer the while to her Divine Son, who with wide-open arms stood ready to receive me. Under this blessed influence the way opened before me. In the year 1882 I had several interviews with the late Archbishop Lynch, whom I came to know intimately, and whose simple apostolic life greatly impressed me. By his advice I placed myself under the instruction of a young scholastic, himself a convert, now a well-known priest of this archdiocese. With his assistance all remaining barriers were removed and, on the twenty-third of October, the feast of Our Most Holy Redeemer, 1883, in the Archbishop's private chapel at St. John's Grove, I came into the one true Church of God.

WILLIAM MARKOE,

WHITE BEAR LAKE, MINNESOTA.

Edited by his son.

As my dear father is now rounding out his 88th year, he no longer feels equal to the task of preparing the account of his conversion for the readers of "Some Roads to Rome in America." He has therefore authorized me to put together such facts, taken from his own writings, journal, etc., and from his frequent descriptions given to us at various times, as may seem appropriate. I am, however, happily able to give much of it in his own words, written when he was younger and better fitted for correspondence with both friend and foe than at the present day.

My father was born in Philadelphia, Pa., on July 25, 1820; and baptized in infancy by Bishop White of the Protestant Episcopal Church. He belonged to a well known Philadelphia family, American of Americans, whose traditions lead back to Revolutionary days, when American and Briton met in deadly combat for the possession of our country. His grandfather is known to have presented to the Philadelphia City Troop a flag which is still preserved as a relic, and which is believed to be the first flag suggesting the thirteen stripes to be made in this country.

As a little boy, a mere child, he attended a boarding school conducted by a Rev. Wm. Chaderton, an Episcopal clergyman, at Burlington, New Jersey. During his stay, the school was moved to Bolton Farm, about 5 miles northwest of Bristol, Pa.; and afterwards to Philadelphia.

Belonging to a family of social position, and which was for some years in a constant whirl of social gaiety, he heard little of religion, receiving no very definite religious instruction of any kind so far as he could recall in later years.

About 1833 he was transferred to a Mr. Walker's day school in Philadelphia; and in 1834 he attended another Philadelphia school conducted by a Mr. Espy. When about fifteen he spent some eighteen months at Easton, Pa., with an uncle, to whom he considers himself indebted for the first definite realization of what study really meant, and of the purpose of the books which had been placed in his hands when at school. Under him he began to make real progress, and to understand the rationale of his studies.

He next took up the study of law; then spent some time at civil engineering; went to Illinois with an older brother to take up farming; became ill and returned home; again resumed civil engineering, and was forced by serious illness to return home once more. His journal, in March, 1842, states that "in consequence of this sickness I endeavoured to reform my life and to live according to the law

of God." In the winter of 1842–3 he began to study Greek, etc., with a view to Holy Orders in the Episcopal Church, having received his first communion a short time previously. In 1843, April 2, being the Fifth Sunday of Lent, he was confirmed by Bishop Onderdonk of Pennsylvania.

It was somewhere about this period of his life that, feeling the necessity of some definite guidance as to his moral conduct, he had a long talk with the Rev. Dr. Morton upon questions of conscience. One of his sisters afterwards wrote to him, in the West, that Dr. Morton had remarked that he hoped "the Catholics would not get hold of William out West; that they would give him all the rules of conduct that he wanted." My father has often marveled at this in later years, as indicating that the shrewd old doctor had discovered then some tendency towards the Catholic Church of which my father himself was totally unconscious.

In the fall of 1843 he set out for St. Louis, intending to take his course of studies there for the ministry. In May of 1844 he left St. Louis, at the wish of Bishop Kemper, for Nashotah, Wisconsin, accompanied by William Stout.

In the spring of 1845 he returned to Philadelphia to prepare for admission to the General Theological Seminary in New York, taking a private preparatory course with Rev. J. Bonnar. In May, 1846, he returned to Nashotah, where he boarded with Mr. Samuel Breck until October, when he at length

went to the General Theological Seminary in New York.

During the spring of 1847 he spent several weeks at Long Branch; and it was probably at this time that he met a young lady, who was a Catholic and with whom he spent some pleasant hours. She made him promise her that he would call upon Bishop Kenrick upon his return to Philadelphia. He did so, and the bishop gave him a copy of his book upon the See of Peter. But the entire incident seems to have left so little impression upon him that for years it was entirely forgotten; and he could not in later years even recall the nature of his conversation with the bishop.

This is the only instance that he recalls where he came in any way in contact with religious teaching amongst Catholics, or with Catholic books.

One long forgotten incident during his days at the Theological Seminary is noted in his journal. In November, 1848, he called one evening upon Rev. Mr. Preston at Mr. Coddington's, and suggested to him a plan which he had conceived "of forming a parish in Philadelphia of which he is to be the head, and Ralston Cox and I curates under him. He said if such a design could be put into execution he should consider himself bound to accept the position." Mr. Preston years afterwards died a Monsignor of the Catholic Church in New York, and the subject of this sketch also came into the true faith in after years.

Some time later he severed his connection with Dr. Muhlenberg's parish, and became a member of Dr. Forbes' parish of St. Luke, making his confession to the Doctor. Years later, when unsettled about his faith, he went to see Dr. Forbes, then a Catholic priest; but, not finding him, he was seen by Rev. Wm. Everett instead. Dr. Forbes soon afterwards relapsed from the true faith.

After graduating at the Seminary, he returned to Philadelphia, and soon afterwards was married in St. James' Church by Dr. Morton.

He was examined for Holy Orders by Bishop Kemper, Dr. Morton and Mr. Odenheimer, and was admitted to Deacon's Orders by Bishop Kemper in St. James' Church in Philadelphia. On September 22, 1849, he again arrived at Nashotah, with his wife and her sister, where they took up their quarters with Dr. Adams and his excellent wife. On March 17, 1850, he was presented for Priest's Orders by the Rev. Messrs. Akerly and Keene, in St. Paul's Church, Milwaukee, and ordained by Bishop Kemper.

He built a beautiful country place near Nashotah, and lived there quietly, attending to his duties as pastor of his parish, for several years. But his health was poor, alternating between fair health and serious illness, and he was rapidly becoming more and more troubled and unsettled in his religious belief.

His broken health was largely due to the expe-

riences he had had in the early Nashotah days, when the Rev. James Lloyd Breck was striving to realize there the Catholic ideal of the true monastic life. My father often refers to that period in his life, and to his intimate relations with Mr. Breck during those early days. He has told us how, under Mr. Breck's grave leadership, they would all file down to the lake in the early morning, and, at Mr. Breck's word of command, one after the other would plunge into the cold waters for the morning dip. My father, having no experienced director to guide him in such matters, overdid the ascetic idea, and by underfeeding and overstudying, destroyed his health to a large extent for the remainder of his life. His mental struggles towards the Catholic Church I am able to repeat in his own words as he has told them himself. In writing, by special request, an account of how he was led to the Church he has said:

"My own conversion was purely doctrinal. It is not meant by this that, after the fashion of my dear old Episcopalian friends, I undertook to judge of the Church by the doctrine, instead of judging of the doctrine by the Church: I had learned better than that even then. My meaning is this: Though still clinging to the absurd branch theory, I logically and firmly believed there could be but one true Church on earth. The nonsensical feature in this heterogeneous combination of theories was, that its advocate, to be consistent, would be obliged to

change his articles of faith according to the variations among these differing and antagonistic branches of this extraordinary one Church, in the order in which he might happen to be traveling or sojourning around among them. My mind was, if not highly logical, at any rate sufficiently so to make it impossible for me to say of the same thing at any one time, it's all black and it's all white, it's all wrong and it's all right, it's an article of Divine faith in one part of God's universal Church and a heresy in another. As my cogitations advanced, it seemed ridiculous to me, in my simplicity, to maintain that the Episcopal Church was in communion with the Roman Church, when the latter, who had at least as good a right as the former to be a judge in the matter, utterly repudiated her claim, and denounced her as heretical. Neither could I tolerate the theory that the apostolical succession alone was sufficient to constitute a valid portion of the Church Catholic, while it was well known that some of the most gigantic and powerful of ancient and modern heresies undoubtedly had this succession."

Here we interrupt the narrative to remark that, of course, even the claim to apostolical succession has again been refuted by Leo XIII, so that even this slender thread can no longer sustain the hopes of our Episcopalian friends for corporate reunion with Rome. But to resume.

"Wherever or whatever the Church of God was,

my logic — and I couldn't get rid of it — told me it must, in the first place, be ONE and undivided in all things ultimately settled by its authority. My mind was instinctively looking for those four things which the Apostles' creed, retained even in the Episcopal Church, declares to be essential characteristics of the true Body of Christ, that it must be 'ONE,' 'Holy,' 'Catholic,' and 'Apostolic.' My thoughts naturally ran upon the first of these; for, without that one, all the others must fall to the ground. When, therefore, it is said that my conversion was doctrinal, it is meant that the oneness, the coherence, the logical and theological completeness and harmony of the doctrines of the Catholic Church, as regards their relations to each other and to natural laws, and to all the purest and loftiest impulses and aspirations of human nature, overwhelmed me with the conviction that the Roman Catholic Church was the ONE and only spiritual organization on this earth to which my allegiance was due; and this conclusion was reached without my ever having read a Catholic work, except a Catholic Theodicée, and in spite of the strong anti-Catholic prejudices in which I had been educated from my childhood.

"But what, it may be asked, was the mental process through which, at last, this goal was reached and what was the guiding star that led to it? . . . I will do my best to make everything clear to you. . . The story is a strange one.

"The real light that led me to my Catholic home

was the doctrine of Transubstantiation! yes! that doctrine which has proved a stumbling-block and a rock of offence to so many souls; which has been mocked, derided and denounced by so many of the wise men of the world, as unreasonable, unphilosophical, a denial of the evidence of the senses and as altogether preposterous — it was that doctrine that landed me in the bosom of the Church. And, where, you will ask me, did I, being a Protestant at the time, get that doctrine from? The answer, perhaps, will prove still more of a puzzle. My thanks for the doctrine are due to the Episcopal book of Common Prayer, the Old and New Testaments and, it is humbly believed and trusted, to the grace of God. But let me explain my position.

"In 1843, I think it was, I determined to study for the Episcopal ministry. Although Philadelphia was my home, as it was my intention to serve as a missionary in the West, I went in 1844, to pursue my studies at Kemper College, an institution about five miles from St. Louis, established by dear, good old Bishop Kemper, the indefatigable and sincerely pious Episcopal missionary Bishop of the Northwestern Territory. In about six months after my arrival there, the college broke down financially and, if my memory is correct, was turned into a county poorhouse. I, with two of my fellow-students, not wishing to leave the West, went to Wisconsin and joined a missionary educational establishment, the Nashotah Mission, founded by

three zealous clergymen with a view to test the practicability of monastic enterprises under the Episcopalian regime. There we studied, did our own work, even washing our own clothes, cooking our own meals and working the farm at the same time. *My* somewhat incongruous lot was to bake bread twice a week for thirty men. Notwithstanding all this work, we were kept assiduously at our devotions. Most of us were thoroughly in earnest. For myself I rejoiced in the somewhat romantic idea of leading a monastic life. I loved the labor, the study and the devotions. I sometimes, indeed, wished we could have more to eat and of a better quality. The fare was generally scant and wretched, partly from poverty and partly on principle. Obedience to rule and unfailing attention to devotions were, with me, points of honor as well as matters of religion. It can readily be understood that this mode of living kept our thoughts almost constantly on religious subjects. My great ambition was to conform as nearly as possible to the lives of the early Christians. I fasted severely and beyond my strength; even on ordinary Fridays eating and drinking absolutely nothing till 3 o'clock in the afternoon, and continuing my work just the same. Some of us had permission to go to communion every day. Need it be said that, as a consequence, my own mind was constantly running on this great subject; and that, therefore, a spiritual crisis was rapidly approaching.

The more my thoughts dwelt upon the question of the Real Presence — which I always believed in, in some vague way or other — the more wonderful and mysterious and inexplicable it seemed in its spiritual and theological aspects. The conviction pressed upon me more and more that, considering the great central position this sacrament occupied in the Roman, the Greek, the Russian and even in some of the more ancient schismatical communions, there must be something vastly greater and more profound about it than anything we Protestants had yet grasped. Even the communion service in the Episcopal prayer book was very suggestive of some wonderful and adorable presence in the consecrated bread and wine; but, unhappily, just where one might expect that the soul was about to be filled with some satisfying doctrine on the subject, just there some lame and impotent and illogical conclusion was arrived at which left the mind gazing, as it were, into vacancy. Still, I thank the prayer book for its suggestiveness. It was these fragments of Catholic teaching which kept my mind ever on the alert for the inevitable logical deductions which I was convinced could not be far off.

"One morning, after receiving communion — it was no sacrament, but God's mercy, I solemnly believe, sent a special grace with it — a light, like a flash from heaven, burst in upon my poor soul. It was like the sun suddenly beaming through a rift in the dark storm cloud. It was no miracle, but it

was a distinctive grace. It could have been nothing else. Instantly the whole doctrine of the Incarnation in all its offices and functions bearing upon man's fall and his redemption and sanctification, opened to my perception. The absolute necessity, in the scheme of salvation, for the literal interpretation of our Lord's words in the sixth chapter of St. John seemed irrefutable to me, and justified beyond cavil the doctrine of the Catholic Church as to Transubstantiation. Every doctrine of Christianity seemed illuminated by the Incarnation. Faith, works, justification, sanctification, preventing grace, works in Christ and works out of Christ, and all those matters so mooted among Protestants, fell into their proper places, and Catholic doctrine ranged itself before me as one coherent, perfect, glorious whole. It always appeared to my mental vision like a picture. There was the bright, central sun, the Incarnation. The beautiful beams of light which, without separation from the main body, continuously, naturally and necessarily streamed from it, were the seven sacraments and the whole round of Catholic doctrines. I seemed, without any adequate study, to have almost mastered, at least in its general features, the sum and substance of Catholic theology. The relief to my troubled mind was beyond expression. But did I, then, without further delay, rush at once to hide myself in the bosom of my long lost mother?

"Alas! for the dullness of the soul, even to God's

greatest mercies: I remained an Episcopalian for some nine years afterwards; but it was always under a delusion. I clung to the fatuous theory that the Episcopal Church might yet be set right if her children would only work faithfully to that end within her fold. During my subsequent studies, at the General Theological Seminary in New York, I adhered to my ideas of the Incarnation, but I found few to sympathize with me or even to understand what I meant. Remnants of the doctrine in its integrity might be found occasionally in some of the oldest Anglican writers; but, however it was then, or, under the influences of the tractarian movement and of modern ritualism, however it may be now, certainly in my time it was among Protestants almost an unheard of notion. The persistent denial of Transubstantiation emasculated every Protestant attempt to uphold the Incarnation in its completeness. That definition alone, has saved the great central fact of Christianity, "*et verbum caro factum est*," from all paring down and from all possibility of misconception or of subtle evasion.

"When, after ordination, I returned to Nashotah as a missionary, being still full of my beautiful vision, it cropped out on every occasion. It was the under current of thought in every sermon I preached. It would not down in my conversations with my brother clergymen, and the natural result followed. I was a marked man. When the period of my diaconate had expired I nearly lost

my ordination to the priesthood on the question of the Real Presence. It was only the kindness of dear old Bishop Kemper's heart that let me through.

"To shorten my story, I was spiritually and socially more and more alone. The situation seemed a lifeless, homeless one and became worse and worse every day. All my reading — upon principle I avoided Catholic books — dispirited me. It seemed flat, stale, unprofitable, artificial, forced and utterly false. The Ritualist Clergy — they were just coming on then — seemed affected and silly: mere children playing church; though, we believe they were in all sincerity. At length I moved, with my wife and two little children, to Burlington, N. J., in hopes of finding relief in new pastures. There we met the late Monsignor Doane, with whom a sympathy soon sprang up on the great question; though a sympathy of a very quiet kind; for I was a *quasi* guest in his father's diocese. Finally, after we had moved to New Brunswick in the same state, the *Ecclesiastical History of Great Britain*, by the Protestant Collier, finished my career as an Episcopalian. He destroyed all my long cherished idols, and most effectually. Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer, good Queen Bess and even the old British Bishops of St. Augustine notoriety, and the whole tribe of Reformers, appeared to me as a most vacillating, turbulent, self-seeking set of God-forsaken rebels, instead of honest, learned, trustworthy Christian

guides. I was appalled. My God! I thought, are these the leaders to whom the keeping of my soul has been so long confided? Are these the guides of my salvation? Are these the great champions of God's unchangeable truth?

"The work was done. On the second of August, 1855, my wife, whose convictions had kept pace with my own, our two little ones and myself were received into the bosom of the Holy Mother Church, by Father Everett, in St. Ann's Church, New York. Soon afterwards the joyful news reached us that George Doane, as we then called him, had gone to Bishop Bayley at midnight and asked to be received into the true fold, and that he was now a Catholic. A most kind letter of congratulation was soon received from Father Preston, who had preceded us into the Church. He had been a tower of strength and a rare example of piety to many of us at the Seminary.

Only one great disappointment of a spiritual nature do I recall after my reception into the Church. Everything appeared so clear, so beautiful and satisfying to me, that it seemed as if it would only be necessary to show to others what I saw, in order to make them also gladly embrace the Faith. Failure followed nearly every attempt. One day walking along the road with an old Irish farmer I spoke in a disappointed tone of these failures. He looked at me in a half pitying, half contemptuous way and, with an expressive, nervous,

irritable twitch at the tails of his coat, he exclaimed, 'There are some of them Jesus Christ Himself couldn't convert, and what can *you* do?' His words have been a consolation to me ever since.

"Dr. Brownson somewhere deprecates the talk indulged in about the sacrifices made by converts to the Church; as if the reputed losses were for a moment to be compared with the infinite gains. I agree with him. It seems to me affectation and a worldly want of appreciation of those gains, as well as a base ingratitude for the wonderful work which a merciful God does for the converted. Sacrifices, then, compared with the peace of mind and the solaces enjoyed, even as to this life, I have had none worthy of the name. My own immediate family are good Catholics and devoted to their God. What greater happiness could a sinful creature ask of his Creator? My experiences, then, as a Catholic, have simply been peace, rest, confidence, and a sure hope of eternal life through the infallible promises of God. And now let me finish with weightier words than I can utter — the words of Dr. Newman:

"'Such were the thoughts concerning the "Blessed vision of Peace" of one whose long continued petition had been that the Most Merciful would not despise the work of His own hands, nor leave him to himself; while yet his eyes were dim, and his breast laden, and he could but employ Reason in the things of Faith. And now, dear

reader, time is short, eternity is long. Put not from you what you have here found; regard it not as a mere matter of present controversy; set not out resolved to refute it, and looking about for the best way of doing so; seduce not yourself with the imagination that it comes of disappointment, or disgust, or restlessness, or wounded feeling, or undue sensibility, or other weakness. Wrap not yourself round in the associations of years past; nor determine that to be truth which you wish to be so, nor make an idol of cherished anticipations. Time is short, eternity is long.'

"*Nunc dimittis servum tuum, domine, secundum verbum tuum in pace: quia viderunt oculi mei salutare tuum.*"

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I was brought up in the sect of the Swedenborgians or Church of the New Jerusalem, as those call themselves who accept the doctrines of Emmanuel Swedenborg. This eminent Swedish scientist late in life believed himself divinely appointed to teach a new interpretation of Christianity and to found a new church which was to be, as he claimed, a fulfilment of the Scriptural prophecies concerning the second coming of Christ. He held that the Scriptures have an allegorical or "spiritual" sense and that all things in the realm of nature have similarly a "correspondence" to the things of heaven. But Swedenborg's most remarkable legacy to posterity is a series of narratives of sights seen by him through his "spiritual eyes" and conversations had by him with angels, demons and the spirits of the departed.

Doubts of the reality of what Swedenborg has related came to me when I was about fifteen years old, and about the same time, impelled by a widening curiosity on religious matters, I began to inquire into the beliefs of other churches and to attend

their services. A retired banker lent me some very radical books in which an attempt was made to trace Christianity to purely natural sources and even to derive it from Buddhism. I read some of the theories of German Biblical critics and used to discuss philosophy with a schoolmate who was studying for the Protestant Episcopal ministry. The differences dividing the various sects of Christianity now became to me of less import than a rational foundation for our belief in the existence of God, the freedom of the will, and the immortality of the soul. My interest in philosophy was stimulated by the hope of finding through it proofs of these great truths of the religious life.

At eighteen years of age I entered Harvard University and took as part of my curriculum a number of courses in psychology, ethics, history of philosophy, and metaphysics. My teachers were professors Bowen, James, Royce and Palmer — all men of reputation and independent views. I recollect writing on the Registrar's record that I was a rationalist in religion but preferred the Episcopal service. I had considerable sympathy with the Broad Church movement in that denomination, which permits the adherent to believe pretty much as he pleases; but I was not as yet inclined to join any church. When I graduated from the University I was still unsettled in religious belief. My study of philosophy had shown me the problems that confront the student, had trained me to view

them strictly upon their merits, and had taught me to use my own powers of mind in solving them. Whatever may be the educational value of such a mode of teaching philosophy, in my own case it rendered me more ready than I think I should otherwise have been to give a fair hearing to the claims of the Catholic Church.

Among my classmates at the University was a young man of quiet, refined manner, a Catholic, with whom I often talked on questions of philosophy and religion. When points were raised by me or by other classmates against the Catholic Church, as would sometimes happen when we were gathered about the dining table, he would good-humoredly but effectively hold his own in defence of his faith; but he never tried to make a Catholic of me or even suggested that I should look into the claims of the Catholic Church. In a letter that I wrote him after graduation I mentioned quite casually that I was still wandering about like a lost sheep in search of a fold. To my surprise he wrote me in reply, "You will never find rest for your reason except in the Catholic Church." My correspondent was then studying for the priesthood in the Paulist college at Washington, D. C. His remark surprised me the more because I had always looked upon the Catholic Church as the most conservative of the churches and therefore not likely to interest one who looked to the science and philosophy of the future for a solution of religious problems. Yet

upon reflection I had to admit to myself that I knew nothing about the Catholic Church or what it teaches; and so I wrote back to my friend that I should like to ask him some questions about his church. He cordially assented; and so began a correspondence that lasted for more than two years. To these letters of one who is to-day the zealous and well-beloved pastor of a great Western parish, I owe, more than to any other human agency, my conversion to the Catholic faith. But there were to be searchings of the heart, anxious deliberations, wrenching of family ties, and some prejudice to be overcome before that moment came.

What impressed me most in my friend's letters was his presentation of the Catholicity of the Catholic Church, just as my conception of her intolerance was my greatest difficulty. I had been neglecting the past and looked only to the future; the Church builds upon the past and tests the present and the future. I saw that I had been less broad in all my boasted liberality than the Church has been in her supposed narrowness. There was, moreover, in the conception of a church that is one, holy, catholic, and apostolic something that appealed to my imagination as none of the sects had done; and that idea also conformed to my ideal of what a church should be. I readily admitted my friend's postulate that a church that is divinely established to guide men to eternal salvation must be an infallible interpreter of revelation. The American Constitution, al-

though it was expressed in the clearest possible terms and subjected to the scrutiny of the finest legal minds of the time when it was promulgated, yet has required a judiciary culminating in the Supreme Court to interpret its meaning and to determine its application; and even these safeguards have proved insufficient to save the Union without an appeal to arms. How much more does the Bible, which is the constitution, as it were, by which man must direct his life in the Christian commonwealth, need an interpreter if Christian unity is to be maintained and the laws of the spiritual life wholesomely observed! A divine revelation must reveal truth to man. If it is liable to more than one interpretation, or is open to contradictory meanings upon vital points of belief — and there would be no need of revelation if no truths were vital or essential to salvation — then revelation is incomplete. The Catholic Church claims to be an infallible interpreter of the teachings of Christ as recorded in Scripture or handed down by tradition. Theologians may discuss, sometimes for centuries, questions of interpretation or of speculative theology; yet in the fulness of time, when the welfare of the faithful demands that a definition be made, the Church, acting under the divine guidance, is competent to make it. Revelation thus becomes a living truth and is not left, as Protestants make it to be, a dead letter.

The charge of intolerance, so often brought

against the Church, was, as I have said, my most serious difficulty. My intellectual sympathies were wide. I rejoiced in the progress of science and archæology, and in the application of critical and historical methods to various branches of knowledge. Does not the Church oppose or at least discourage such inquiries, I asked my correspondent. The Catholic Church, he replied, encourages and fosters every movement by which the bounds of human knowledge are enlarged; but she tests results by the criterion of revealed truth. The scientific sphere along its periphery touches upon truths essential to man's spiritual welfare and to the conservation of these truths the Church cannot be indifferent. Her problem is, so to speak, how to be faithful to the divine "deposit" of revelation and yet yield to reason its legitimate fruits. Her policy may change from age to age as to the means by which this end is to be attained, just as the policy of administration in the civil State changes with the times; but the obligation laid upon her by the divine commission remains constant. Scientists and critics are never so far-seeing as the Church; they look only along the line of their own researches. The Church, like a city set on a hill, sees in all directions. True catholicity is not an easy-going acceptance of opinions as all more or less true, but it is a critical incorporation of truth wherever found into the unity of one self-consistent whole. This catholicity is found in the philosophy

as well as in the theology of the Church. The system of St. Thomas is founded upon the most comprehensive thinker of antiquity — Aristotle — who in turn utilized the best thought of his predecessors. The activity of Catholic scholars, of the so-called Neo-scholastic Movement, in interpreting and criticising the theories of modern psychologists and metaphysicians in the light of scholastic principles, bears testimony to the vitality and adaptability of the method. In Biblical studies too, the late Pope Leo, while urging Catholic students to keep abreast of the progress of criticism, pointed out the mode in which the language of the sacred writers should be interpreted in the face of seemingly contradictory evidence from science or archæology.

I had reached a point in my search after religious truth where I was satisfied that the Catholic Church is the true fold; I need be a wanderer no longer. Yet to test the soundness of my reasoning I wrote to my old chum the Episcopalian, who was studying under distinguished professors in a German university, and asked him to tell me why, in the light of what he knew of theology and church history, I should *not* become a Roman Catholic. My friend I knew to be never at a loss in controversy; and I may add that he afterwards became professor of church history in a seminary of his denomination. He replied in a closely written letter of fifty pages in which the objections of the "other side" were presented ably and dispassionately. I

considered his arguments carefully; and while I recognized in some of them difficulties, at least for one not well versed in theology and church history, yet I found nothing to shake the faith of one who knew and realized the true nature and mission of the Catholic Church and was willing to read the New Testament without trying to twist words from their plain and natural meanings. The Catholic is not bound to prove his faith, although when properly instructed he is fully capable of doing so. It is enough for him that the Catholic Church has an unbroken continuity with Christ and St. Peter, the leader of the Apostles. The Catholic Church is in possession, and possession is nine points of the law. It is for others to disprove, if they can, her claim to be the one fold of Christ; and to show that the promises of Christ do not apply to her. Such is the attitude in which I think the convert should place himself; standing thus upon the Rock of Peter, he is impregnable.

I did not, however, make up my mind to enter the Catholic Church without some severe mental struggles, vague doubts, and hesitation traceable to inherited prejudice against the Roman Church. Converts nearly always have a similar experience and with some I believe the temptation to draw back must be terrible. Nothing but prayer is one's resource at that supreme moment. One morning following a day when all looked dark before my mental vision, I awoke at peace; my hesitation had

vanished and I was ready and eager to put myself under instruction for baptism into the Catholic Church. I had received the divine gift of faith. I at once secured a letter of introduction to the late Reverend N. L. Mooney, then attached to the Cathedral parish in Chicago, and after a period of instruction of unusual thoroughness, I was received on Christmas Eve, 1892. Father Mooney was a man of wide reading and sound erudition, and to the care with which I was prepared, not only in the doctrines of the Catechism but also in many points of philosophy and church history, I owe the ready solution of many a difficulty in later years. I have never had a moment's doubt or regret since I became a Catholic.

Converts are accused of abandoning reason in despair and of taking refuge in blind faith. The charge, when made in all sincerity, arises from a misconception of the nature of revealed truth. I use my reason, in the first place, to determine which is the true Church, to test its claims and to answer the objections brought against it. In the second place, I supplement my reason with truths of revelation; I do not supplant reason by faith. The dogmas of faith are not contrary to reason, although most of them are above the power of reason adequately to conceive and to explain. The American who accepts a ruling of the Supreme Court does not nullify his reason. He accepts the testimony of an authority which his reason assures him

to be trustworthy. That is what the Catholic does in accepting the dogma of the infallibility of the Pope with this difference, however: that the American's confidence in the Supreme Court is based upon human and practical grounds, while the faith of the Catholic in a dogma of the Church rests upon the promises of Christ that His Church shall never fail. Catholics alone among Christians, I believe, understand and reverence revelation as it is in its true nature; just as they alone appreciate the Incarnation in all its implications for theology and worship.

MR. JOHN MITCHELL,

LATE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED MINE WORKERS.

My conversion pleased my wife as a matter of course, but that was not the motive that guided me in the matter. I had carefully investigated the subject and had long since made up my mind that I wanted to die in the Catholic faith.

I am going to do my utmost to be a good Catholic and not one of whom there are so many in the world, who use the Catholic Church only when they are in sore distress. I want to be a consistent Catholic and a useful one.

"The farther I have gone down into him (Mitchell), the better he proves to be."—*President Roosevelt.*

MISS JULIA G. ROBINS,

BOSTON, MASS.

I was born and bred in Boston, in the centre of Unitarianism of the Conservative type, sometimes spoken of as Channing Unitarianism. This was the natural outcome of Puritanism; a revolt against all that was unlovely in that too rigid creed and practice. It was good, sterling stock, that old Puritan New England race, and no finer exponents of Unitarianism could be found. Their creed, however, did not remain stationary, but gradually a new school, or sect within a sect, began to develop, and Liberal or Radical Unitarianism came more and more to the front.

Soon after I became old enough to think for myself and to question the beliefs that I had inherited, I recognized the inconsistency of the Conservative school of Unitarianism. I had been brought up to believe that Christ was unlike any other human being who had ever lived; perhaps even might have had pre-existence; that He was without sin, had performed miracles, that He rose from the dead; and yet — He was not God. I was told, however, that He was divine — and this point was made of great importance — under-

standing the word to mean partaking of the nature of God, in a way quite different from that of any other human being who had ever lived.

I remember the first blow which came to awaken me out of my security in this belief. The remark was made to me, "Christ was God, or Christ was man. He could not be divine, and yet not God; the terms contradict each other. There is not, and could not be, such a being neither God nor man." This statement came upon me like a sudden shock, but it seethed in my brain; I could not get away from it; and gradually my beliefs took shape, and I awoke to the consciousness that I was an out-and-out Radical Unitarian. I was confident that Jesus Christ was not God; therefore He was man; and with that conclusion all belief in miracles or anything supernatural in the Bible fell away.

As I look back it seems meagre diet on which to feed a human soul; yet I still had great reverence for the Bible as the most holy book ever written, and for the person of Christ, His perfect life, and His spiritual and moral teachings. In the present fulness of light, it is not easy to throw myself back into the old attitude, and I now wonder how I could have gleaned as much inspiration as I did from the reading of the Bible in those days. I remember having a suspicion now and then that there was not, logically, enough motive power or authority for the highest religious life in the creed that I professed, and that probably much of our religious

sentiment was due to a sort of inherited instinct from pious ancestors; but, on the whole, I was happy in my belief. I had such absolute faith in God's goodness and love, and in a future life untroubled by a thought of the existence of a devil or of hell, that it gave me most comforting assurance that in the end all souls would get to heaven. I felt sure that beyond the grave there must be some punishment for sin, but also a chance to repent and grow better, till the purified soul would be ready to enter into the full bliss of heaven.

I found among Unitarians a very high moral standard and a strong sense of personal responsibility. Each man must live so as to save his own soul, as there was no belief in the redeeming power of Christ's blood.

Besides the lofty standards of morality and the great reverence for Christ's life as the model which we were bidden to strive to follow (and I remember thinking that it could only be an example to man, if He were man; for if God, how could any human being hope to walk in His footsteps?) there was a certain intellectual satisfaction. I found great solace in the thought that our beliefs were consistent with the proved facts of science, and that no supernatural religion could make good such a claim. This confidence was perhaps the one argument which kept me most firmly anchored to the Unitarian creed. I saw no reason to think that God had supernaturally revealed Himself; and as

to belief in the Trinity, I could not imagine how any logical mind could hold such a view. I was, in fact, so firmly fixed in my opinion that it was a contradiction in terms and could not be true, that I came very near being an illiberal "Liberal."

At one time I was much influenced by the preaching of one of the most "advanced" Unitarians, a man with uncommon gifts of oratory, with real love of God, and for his fellow-man, whom he was honestly trying to help onward and upward. This minister was deeply imbued with the Herbert Spencer school of philosophic thought, and popularized mental philosophy from the pulpit. A little knowledge is a dangerous thing, and this popularizing or cheapening of philosophy for the multitude is one of the most insidious means of sapping religious belief. It puffs up with conceit the listener, who becomes satisfied that he has solved the riddle of the universe; and that it is rather an easy affair after all. Such methods breed the most arrogant self-complacency and they kept me happy for years, for from my lofty height I looked upon other creeds as hide-bound with the remnants of outgrown superstitions.

And yet, all the time I clung to the beauty of the spiritual and moral truths in the Bible, and earnestly strove to live up to them. So convinced was I of being in the right, that I longed to call to others to come outside their barriers to breathe the fresh air.

Was I really at rest in my inmost heart? No; for I never considered these questions of religion as settled, and I read far and wide everything that seemed to promise me light — largely, however, the writings of the self-styled "advanced school" of thought. Now and then a suspicion did cross my mind that indifference to religion was the natural outcome of all this freedom. We of this generation had the advantage of the religious beliefs of those preceding us, but what would become of the next? The laxity about church-going did not trouble me. I considered that church services were "a means, not an end." Some persons were helped by them, others were not; let the former then go to church, and the latter stay away. There was another phrase which helped to smother any disquietude as to where we might be drifting; it was this: "In New England we have devout free thinking." True it is that in this part of our country there are many honest souls freely questioning religious beliefs, and in a reverent spirit; though *devout* I can hardly now consider their attitude.

Thus, with my intellectual conceit flattered by this fancy that our religious views were alone consistent with the proved facts of science, and fascinated by sermons preached on that basis by a man of talent, for whose character I had great respect, and with my soul nourished by spiritual truths taken from Holy Scriptures (but the supreme value of which I now know so well comes from being based

on supernatural authority), I was cheerful and content.

Without premeditation, I took a step which eventually led me into the Catholic Church. *I questioned a Catholic as to his belief.*

Before going further, it may pertinently be asked if this was actually the first time that the claims of the Catholic Church had attracted my attention; and I must say that it was not. Many years before the power of the Church as the mightiest institution on earth had impressed me. I realized that I knew little about it, and that at least I ought to inform myself, so I asked questions of a few priests and other Catholics, and pondered a good deal over the matter at recurring intervals, but never went deep enough to get much light. I gained *something,* so that my newly acquired interest in the Church was never wholly lost, but I was soon drawn back into my old beliefs after the most superficial acquaintance with Catholic doctrine; not enough to remove more than a surface prejudice against an institution of which I was surprisingly ignorant, and what seems to me now as culpably so.

My short incursions into Catholic territory had not been wholly fruitless. I had learned a little — pitifully little, it is true — but I had gained a greater respect for Catholics and for their Church; yet I still cherished with a jaunty confidence born of ignorance of the very foundations of their faith, and nourished by a smattering of mere odds and

ends of theology, an obstinate belief that their creed was outgrown in the light of modern research.

Just at this time when I was feeling especially happy in my "liberal" views, I happened to meet a friend who, to my surprise, had become a Catholic two years before. I had more than ordinary respect for his intellectual ability, so when the news came of his "going over to Rome," as the phrase is, my first feeling was one of keen disappointment in him, and I exclaimed, "How could he, of all men, have taken such a retrogade step?"

Many years had passed since our last meeting, when our paths came together once more. Almost my first words to him were: "So you have become a Catholic. Are you willing to tell me how this happened?" Looking searchingly at me, as if to read the motive of my question, he answered with great deliberation, "Yes — if you really wish to know."

In what condition of mind was I that day when without warning came into my life the first marked human influence which put me on the path that in time led me into the Catholic Church? I was in the full enjoyment of a holiday time in Rome; I had not been harassed for two years or more by any special doubts about my own Unitarian standpoint, and was in fact in my most aggressively confident mood. Yet I was honest, and it was in no flippant spirit that I put this momentous question. There was an element of curiosity in it, the desire to find

out if any reasonable explanation could be given for what seemed inexplicable. I am sure, though, that it did not flash across my mind for a moment that his statement of the case could unsettle my views in the least; for was not I out in the open, as it were, with beliefs well in harmony with modern scientific thought? Still, it would be at least interesting to find out what had induced him to take this "retrogade" step.

That first talk lasted a long time, and now I can scarcely go back and put my finger on all the points of Catholic doctrine so clearly stated that day that the old sense of security in my belief was disturbed. But from that hour I can date the beginning of the revolution which resulted in my becoming a Catholic; for though my progress was slow, and it was twenty-three months before I could say "I believe," and ask to be received into the Church, there was never any really backward step.

In trying to recall what one new point of view was so forcibly put before me that afternoon as to rouse me out of my old-time lethargy, I am sure that it was the explanation given to me of the grounds on which the Catholic Church bases her belief in the Real Presence of our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar; that belief cherished by her as so unspeakably precious, as the very centre of her life. I was the farthest away possible from any understanding as to why the Catholic Church held this belief, and thus had a repugnance

towards the doctrine, and that scorn which is often most tenaciously clung to when it springs from ignorance. I did, however, try to rid my mind of all prejudice as I listened; and to my amazement I saw at once the strong logic in the reasoning brought forward in support of the Catholic doctrine, which declares that our Saviour meant His words to be taken literally, while the Protestant looks upon them as used in a figurative sense.

In order to be perfectly fair in the matter, what ought one to do first, to get at the proper interpretation of Christ's words? Simply by going back in imagination to the time when they were spoken and joining the multitude, to discover there on the spot what He meant His words to convey, and how His hearers there present understood them.

Is it to be supposed that Christ meant to speak figuratively when He told His hearers of the fearful penalty attached for noncompliance with His commands? — "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you." The command has equal force with that when, in teaching the necessity of the Sacrament of Baptism, He said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark xvi, 16).

What was the effect of our Lord's words on the multitude? Did the people believe that He had taken back His words, or that He had spoken figur-

atively? What became of those who had so angrily muttered against this strange idea of eating His flesh? Did they accept it? Quite the reverse. They turned away in disgust, and "walked no more with him." Did Christ even then call them back, seeing the effect of His words? No. *He let them go;* then turning to His twelve Apostles, asked sadly, "Will ye also go away?" and Simon Peter, the spokesman instantly replied, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life, and we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God."

This explanation made a most powerful impression upon me; yet it was a long time before I was able to accept it, for my brain was so obscured by a tangle of misconceptions of Catholic truth that it was impossible to clear them all away at once. There is no doubt, however, that my conversion to the faith dates from first hearing this explanation of the belief in the Real Presence. I could find no argument whatever against it, and the logic of it held such sway over me that it urged me on to further investigation of Catholic doctrine. The memorable scene of the Last Supper was a solemn reiteration of the same truth, when our Lord, taking a morsel of bread in His Hand, said, "This is my body."

During the six weeks that I remained in Rome I was eager in this new search for light, and determined to leave no means untried to get at the truth,

while my friend was untiring in his efforts to help me. After those few weeks I never saw him again until I had been for nearly a year a Catholic, but he continued his assistance by letters. These letters and those of a Passionist monk, an American by birth, descent and education, were my greatest outside helps, not only for sympathy and counsel, but in guidance as to what to read.

What I gained during my short stay in Rome was of prime importance. I became engrossed in my study of Catholic doctrine, which unfolded itself before my astonished gaze, so that at times there was almost the excitement of original discovery. The openness to investigation everywhere, and the logical explanation ready in answer to all puzzling questions, were perhaps what most surprised me. One bugbear after another disappeared. Where were the dark, secret corners which I had always pictured, into which no one was allowed to peep? I never could find them, though clinging for a long time to the belief that if I searched enough, the warning barrier would be reached; but I have always looked in vain.

There was a feeling of excitement during those weeks in Rome. How could it be otherwise? The scales were dropping from my eyes. I was beginning to see that I had been feeding myself largely all my life long on absolute misstatements of Catholic beliefs. The Catholic Church was not what I had thought it, but something so wholly different

that my reverence increased in steady proportion to my knowledge.

I returned to my own country in the late summer, and was singularly alone, never for sixteen months speaking to any Catholic on this subject which had become of such vital moment to me. I was shaken out of my old-time security. This mighty Catholic Church was confronting me with her claim of being the very Church that Christ had planted on earth, and given into the charge of St. Peter. Was it so? I would at least find out what the Holy Scriptures had to tell me on the subject. I would read Christ's words afresh, as if I had never read them before, trying to forget all preconceived notions. I would do my best to get acquainted with St. Peter, St. John, and St. Paul, as living personalities, and see what they had to say about it. In this study of the Bible, alone and unaided, but read in this spirit, as if it were a new book, light began to stream in upon me. I soon saw that my old way of reading the Bible had been with distinct ideas beforehand as to what I should find there. The puzzling texts and apparent contradictions I had always forced to fit in with my conception of what God must be, as my ideal of perfect goodness. Truly such a standard by which to test divine truth is much like making God in man's image.

Merely studying the Bible from this fresh point of view made it come home to me with the force of a new revelation. The claims that Christ ad-

vanced definitely for Himself and that His disciples made for Him, had little in common with the old Unitarian basis of belief. He claimed to be God. His words come crowding to my mind. It is hard to decide which among the many to choose. How vivid that wonderful scene when Christ had told His followers that they had "seen the Father." Philip asks his Master "Lord show us the Father, and it sufficeth us." Could such an extraordinary request have been made to a merely human creature? and the answer, instead of a rebuke to his effrontery, is a gentle reproach that he could have ever doubted; for with a tone of disappointment, our Lord answered, and those glorious words ring out as clearly now as they did 1900 years ago: "*Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, 'Show us the Father.'*"

After trying to become acquainted with those who had actually sat at our Lord's feet — and with St. Paul, so close to that time — my next interest was to learn about the early Church, to find out if at the beginning the Christian Church and the Catholic Church were identical. What do we learn from Polycarp, who studied with St. John? and what does St. Irenæus, his pupil, tell us, who reports from his teacher's lips the words which he had "heard John and the others say"? Everything that I could glean of this early Church proved to

me that it was the Catholic Church from the beginning. This is not only a matter of history but is written in stone thoughout the Catacombs.

When once I grasped this idea that our Lord had founded a Church, and that He had promised to be with it to the end of the world, the victory was largely won. Every inquiry that I made went to prove that in the Catholic Church alone was His divine promise fulfilled. I worked away for months together, over one point and another — often questions of minor importance or matters of discipline. The confessional, for instance, was for a long time my chief stumbling-block; but when once I made up my mind that our Lord's Church was the Catholic Church from the beginning, even though it took some months before I could come meekly as a little child to our Lord's feet to be taught, I was then well on the right road.

The Infallibility of the Pope was never a difficulty to me, but seemed the natural outcome of our Lord's promise. How else could His Church be unfailingly guided by His divine Presence unless there was a mouth-piece whose words human ears could hear? As in all civil governments, an ultimate tribunal is needed to prevent hopeless confusion (as, for example, in the United States a Supreme Court to interpret the Constitution), so if a Church has a divine Founder, it must be able to understand beyond the possibility of difference of opinion what that divine Head orders.

Step by step, irregular though they often were, I had worked my way along to Christmas-time, twenty months from that day in Rome when I was first awakened out of my old sense of security in my belief and the point was reached when I could find no argument against the claims of the Catholic Church; and yet I had come to a standstill. It seemed to me that I was no nearer believing; yet I had begun *to long to believe*. Suddenly the thought struck me, "Why do I never go to church?" So on this Christmas day I went to Mass. I had no prayer book, and could not follow the service intelligently, and I came away discouraged. The next day I told a Catholic friend of my difficulties, and from that time the way was made easy for me. She gave me a manual of prayers, and I never missed my Sunday Mass with her. My heart was crying out more and more for faith. Why could I not believe? My head was satisfied, but my heart seemed like a stone. A priest suggested my making an act of faith, but I always prefaced the "O my God, I firmly believe," with —"I wish that I could truly say."

I asked another priest if it would help me to genuflect before the Blessed Sacrament when I could not yet say actually that I believed that our Lord was there; and he advised against it, and that was consonant with my own feeling of what was sincere.

Thus I went struggling along for three months

more, pouring out my heart in prayer for faith; I was often sad and discouraged, wondering if I should never be able to believe. It was a time of keen suffering, but, I now realize, of most salutary discipline. For how many years had I not been completely satisfied with my own conception of divine truth? The blessed day was coming when I was to be thoroughly humbled, when I should kneel at our Lord's feet and ask Him to show me the way. I thought that I was asking Him then, but I was not as yet humble enough. God alone knew just how long I must kneel there pleading, imploring to see — before He would give me the light.

Passion Week arrived, and I was asked to hear a Jesuit priest preach at a convent. I was so ignorant of Catholic ways that I did not even know that it was called a Retreat; but most gratefully I accepted this opportunity offered. What those days meant to me it is not possible to express fully. Most attentively I listened, hanging upon every word. I followed with deepest interest the services in the chapel. On the Thursday, with no especial warning, the full illumination came. My soul responded, and I knew that I believed. The next day made me only the more sure; and when on Saturday I went to early Mass, and every one in the chapel received our living Lord in the holy Sacrament of Communion, and I was left alone, the tears streamed from my eyes. I was desolate indeed.

Never shall I forget the pain of it. How long must I remain outside? I wanted to be taken in at once. I knew that I was a Catholic at heart, and I did not wish to run the chance of dying outside the Church.

Palm Sunday came, and with what new significance! — and then Holy Week — my first Holy Week in truth. How eagerly I drank in new life, as if I had been thirsting and unsatisfied always. Seven weeks I was under instruction and carefully tested, and every day Catholic truth unfolded before me with greater force.

Although happy as never before during those weeks, yet none the less is that testing-time a painful time. In my own heart I had taken the step and I was a Catholic, and I am sure that there is a special protecting grace over one at such a time, for it is certainly a period of weakness in comparison to the strength which can only come through the Sacraments of the Church.

No one but a convert can ever grasp adequately what it means to have been without the Sacraments, and then to have them; the contrast is far greater than that of a ship at the mercy of the winds and waves, anchorless and rudderless, and one with all sails set following unswervingly her desired course. The light of faith is there which shows the way; but one is not in port.

I was quite prepared not to be conscious at the time of the full significance of each of the great

Sacraments of the Church, for I had been wisely warned not to expect to feel too much on those momentous occasions, though to some persons God in His infinite mercy grants at such times great consolation; but never can I forget the peace and calm which were mine on that day when for the first time I could truly say "I am a Catholic," or the superhuman joy, the consciousness that at last I was safe within God's own fold.

This it is which enables me to say, not as in the old days, "I think this and that"; but now I *know*, for I have found the truth at last.

ALICE RUTHERFURD,

NEW YORK.

Wife of Winthrop Rutherfurd, Esq., and daughter of the Hon. Levi Parsons Morton, late Vice President of the United States.

MY STEPPING STONES TO THE CHURCH

1. Supernatural graces.
2. "Thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my Church."
3. Unchanging Doctrines.
4. The Authority to Teach and to Preach.
5. The grace derived through Jesus really present in the Blessed Sacrament.
6. The Truth of the Church.
7. The Devotion of its Children.
8. The abounding graces given to Catholics.
9. The satisfaction the heart receives through the channels flowing from the Cross into the Sacraments.
10. The enlightening of the understanding by the doctrines and teaching of the Church on all points of life — theological, religious and practical.
11. The Paradise of the Soul.

THE VERY REV. GEORGE M. SEARLE, D.D., A.M.

SUPERIOR-GENERAL OF THE CONGREGATION OF ST. PAUL THE APOSTLE. Graduated at Harvard, 1857 (A. M. 1860); Assistant at the Dudley Observatory, Albany, discovered the asteroid Pandora; successively instructor at the United States Naval Academy, and assistant at Harvard Observatory; became a Catholic 1862; entered Paulist Congregation, 1868; ordained, 1871; taught for some years in the Paulist seminary, New York; Professor of Mathematics and Astronomy in the Catholic University of America, 1895-99; elected Superior-General of the Paulists, 1904. Author of Elements of Geography — Plain Facts for Fair Minds, and contributions to scientific journals and The Catholic World.

My father was an American Unitarian, my mother English and a member of the Church of England. I was born in London, and, naturally enough, was baptized by a clergyman of the Established Church.

Soon after, however, the family removed to this country, where, my father and mother both dying while I was a mere child, I was left in the charge of his relatives, all Unitarians, and attended their church up to the age of eighteen, with the exception of one year, during which my brother and myself were sent by our guardians to the Episcopal Church of the town, that we might have an

opportunity to follow the religion of our mother should we desire to do so. As our acquaintance was principally among Unitarians, we did not continue our attendance at the Episcopal Church beyond the prescribed time; as might, indeed, having been expected, though the intention of my uncle and aunt in sending us there was no doubt perfectly sincere.

Leaving home shortly after completing my college course at Harvard, to engage in occupation elsewhere, I was provided with a letter, among others, to the Unitarian clergyman in the city where I was to live. The amount of my interest in Unitarianism for its own sake may be judged by the fact that I never delivered the letter, and have not even to this day any idea where the Unitarian church is situated in that city, or where its pastor lived. I suspect that the same would be the case with most young men belonging to Protestant denominations in going to a strange place, unless they wished by acquaintance in their church to obtain a start in business or society. As I had all the start in business I desired, and had very little inclination for society beyond that of my companions in work, this motive did not suggest itself.

It was natural, however, to go to church somewhere on Sunday, and the Catholic cathedral was the most attractive place. I attended High Mass, together with another young man in the same employment as myself, and equally devoid, I imagine,

of any religious convictions. The music was fine, and it was principally for the sake of it that we were so regular in our attendance; for we always took a back seat, and were too far away to make much out of the ceremonies, even had we been interested in them. I saw, however, our late venerated Cardinal — then a Bishop (McCloskey) — and heard him preach on several occasions, but probably paid little attention. I thought at one time of getting a book to assist in following the service, but never did so. The only reason was that I might know better what was going on, and thus occupy myself in a more intelligent way; I had not, as far as I can remember, any suspicion that the Catholic religion could be the true one; indeed, I did not believe there was any true religion, properly so called. I believed in God, but had no faith in revelation.

I cannot see that this attendance at the cathedral had any effect whatever on my subsequent course, unless very indirectly, as may be seen later. I had always regarded the Catholic Church, not indeed with the positive prejudice and outrageously false notions which make many Protestants oppose it so vigorously, but with a kind of lofty disdain, or rather indifference; I considered it as an old fossil, teaching, if it taught anything, some false doctrines which modern enlightenment had long ago exploded. It was to me like the Ptolemaic astronomy, a system which only the ignorant could accept. If the matter of religion had seemed to me of vital

importance, of course I should have seen that false views about it must be very dangerous and of vastly more consequence than false astronomical theories; but I really thought that all that was important or possible to know about God — in whose existence I fully believed — could be found out by a short course of reasoning; that I had already gone through with this, and that probably most other people had.

Humanly speaking, it does not seem likely that I should have given the matter of religion any serious consideration, at this time at least, had it not been for one of my associates in work — strange to say, the only person, if I remember right, with whom I had ever been acquainted, in whom a belief in the Christian revelation as a real, positive system was marked enough to excite interest and inquiry. He was a High-Churchman; Ritualism as it is now understood was in a very undeveloped state, and the services at the little church which he attended had none of the attractions for the eye and ear which I found at the cathedral; still he induced me to accompany him several times.

I cannot trace the exact mental steps through which I passed from Unitarianism to the church of my mother. Morally and spiritually, I think a great change was produced by a sermon which I heard at this little church one evening on the text, "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." I gave up the worldly ambition which had been, though

secretly, my principle motive for exertion, and determined to do everything for God's sake alone. The preacher was not a very eloquent man, and the sermon was probably in itself not an extraordinary one; but God's grace went with it, as it is continually working everywhere.

As to change of doctrine, it must be said that though without any belief in definite dogma, I had still retained the Protestant tradition as to the inspiration of the Bible, and began to get some light from reading it. Taking the Bible for a basis, it does not take very long to dispose of Unitarianism, as my brother, with whom I afterwards carried on a long controversy by letter, was quite willing to concede. The text which did more for me than any other was John xiv, 1: "Ye believe in God; believe also in me;" though, of course, I could not be satisfied intellectually of such a great point as the divinity of our Lord without a great deal of examination. My heart had accepted the truth, but the head had to say "*Nihil obstat*" before I would move.

I returned to the church (so to speak) of my baptism a month or so after the sermon of which mention has been made. Of course no reception was necessary; but I had to prepare for my First Communion, and therefore presented myself to the pastor of our little church to receive his advice and direction. He recommended principally the careful reading of the sixth chapter of St. John's Gospel, and I remember feeling very anxious till the Com-

munion was made, on account of the fifty-fourth verse, which I understood as meaning that it was necessary for salvation. I was confirmed on the feast of the Annunciation, and received the rite alone, it not being the regular time.

The second chapter of Ecclesiasticus, which was read, made a great impression on my mind.

It may probably be imagined that, having got so far as to be a High-Churchman, the rest of the road was easy. It might have been, but I doubt it; the "High" Church is rather a dangerous substitute for the true religion. The friend of whom I have spoken, who had been the means of bringing me thus far, still, after thirty years, remains as he was then. At any rate, the way in which it actually came about was by my getting some experience as a Low-Churchman. Moving into the Massachusetts diocese shortly after my confirmation, I naturally selected as "High" a church as possible for my regular attendance, being aware of the prevailing tendency the other way, and of the "Low" views of the bishop. But to go to the "Church of the Advent" soon became too much trouble, especially in winter, for one living, as I did, several miles from Boston; so I finally gave up the attempt, and turned to the church of our own town, whose pastor was one of the most distinguished in the diocese for learning and for his ability in the pulpit.

But he was certainly very "Low," and some matters in the parish fell into the hands of people even

lower than himself. Many of us became very "Evangelical," and some of the young men, among whom were the pastor's son and myself, were roped — yes, really roped, against our will — by a set of pious ladies, into establishing a regular prayer-meeting. It was held on Sunday evenings in the little chapel, where we also taught Sunday-school, and on another evening in the week at the house of some religious person in the village, near where most of the Catholics lived. Though we tried no direct proselytism, I think we had some hope that a Romanist or two might "experience religion" by means of these village meetings. But how I, and I think most of the other young men — one exception I believe there was — dreaded these performances! The ladies, no doubt, liked them well enough; but then they were not required to take any active part. One of us, of course, always took charge, and that was not so bad; for then you could get up your opening matter quietly at home, select your chapter and prepare your remarks, and spring them on the others. But imagine the misery of those others, of whom you would usually be one, who, especially if our great "exhorter" happened to be absent, might be called on at any moment to make some remarks suggested by the subject, or at least to lead in prayer. The last was not so difficult; for, after all, these extempore prayers fall into a regular rut, and one soon acquires a tolerable facility in them; but the miserable insincerity of pre-

tending to speak to God, when the only real desire was to get through creditably, made one want to avoid them if any remarks could possibly be thought of.

The whole matter became very sickening; and the utter inefficacy of the system as a means to virtue and spiritual life was so evident that I became anxious to find some way to escape. I wanted something that the soul could live on, but did not know where to turn for it. At this time two circumstances, accidental, as it would seem, and not very notable in themselves, turned me in a Catholic direction. One was a trip made with my old friend to the city where we had previously lived, on the occasion of which we made a visit to the cathedral which I had formerly attended, but which now in some way gave me other impressions than those of mere admiration and curiosity. My friend was enough of a Ritualist to genuflect on passing the altar; and though I did not feel like doing that, yet the distinctness with which I remember it makes me think that the idea of the Real Presence made a strong impression on me.

The second accident, if it may be so called, and the one which actually, or at least proximately, had more to do with my determination, was the reading of a book of Miss Frederika Bremer's, in which she gave an account of a visit to Rome, and of her there making some examination of Catholic doctrine. She mentioned the *Catechism of the Council of*

Trent as a book which had been put into her hands. I made up my mind to get this book and see what the Roman Church had to say for itself. Anything seemed better than the miserable position to which I had been brought. So I got the book. It was a great point to have something definite to ask for, and up to this time I had not even known the name of a single work treating on Catholic doctrine. I did not know anything even of anti-Catholic controversy; the whole field was simply a blank. Many, perhaps most Protestants are, I imagine, in that position.

I read the book at night, after everybody else had gone to bed. It may seem strange to say it, but what surprised me was its "Evangelical" tone. I had a general idea that the Roman Church placed the means of salvation in works and outward observances; but here I found the Blood of Christ and His merits put forward as the one price of our redemption, as forcibly as in any book, I had ever read or any sermon I had ever heard. What added much to its weight was that I felt sure this was really Catholic teaching. Controversial books might be traps to catch Protestants, in which the genuine Roman doctrine was manipulated or partly concealed; but here was a real official book, meant for Catholics themselves.

However, I got controversial books, plenty of them, and read them in the same way. I think I got out of the prayer-meetings before this; but I

was still a communicant and taught Sunday-school, and, as I did not know how the thing would turn out, it was necessary to be careful. I did not say or teach anything that I did not believe, but of course kept quiet about what was going on in my own mind.

The getting of the books was a matter of some embarrassment. Donahoe's book-store was in rather a frequented part of the city, and people who knew me were likely to pass that way; so before going in I would take a good look up and down the street to assure myself that the coast was clear, then walk into the store and make my selection. But the question then was how to get out; one could not look up and down the street from inside, and might stumble on some unwelcome friend at the very doorstep. Whether any such saw me come out I cannot tell, for I never ventured to look on these occasions, but plunged ahead and took my chances.

It did not appear that I was found out during the year that I pursued this course of quiet reading. But at last my convictions became so strong, at least of the falsity of Protestantism, that I could not continue to teach in Sunday-school; and then something was suspected. Shortly after I gave up attendance at church, and told some persons confidentially of the course my mind had taken, but I tried to avoid general discussion and remark. This was a critical time; for the alternative now pre-

sented was between the Catholic Church and the abandonment of Christianity as a revelation altogether. I had followed the historical road, as it may be called, and had seen plainly enough by this time that Christianity, if it was anything more than mere human speculation, was Catholicity. And then there was for awhile a time in which I lost interest in the question; how I recovered it, otherwise than by the grace of God, I do not know. I was advised to consult my own pastor and other clergymen. Strange to say, none of them defended their own position with much vigor. My pastor lent me Chillingworth, but also Moëhler's "*Symbolism*,"; the clergyman of the Unitarian church and another whom I consulted, both men of distinguished ability, contented themselves with glittering generalities; another, a neighbor of mine, an excellent and most amiable man, lent me the historical works of Eusebius and Socrates. None attempted any real discussion.

All this time I had never spoken to a single Catholic on the subject of religion, and hardly knew one to whom I could speak. It never occurred to me to go to a priest till after sixteen months from my first start, when my mind was made up as far as it could be; by which I mean that, though I did not believe, I saw no reason for not believing. The argument was as complete, as mere argument could be, to prove the divine construction of the wonderful edifice at the door of which I sat wait-

ing; but practically I was not quite convinced or ready to enter. The grace of God was what I needed; and it came through reading some of the "Annals of the Propagation of the Faith," I think. It moved me to act, to go to a priest and ask to be received. The veil was still between my eyes and the truth as Catholics see it; what might be behind that veil I could not tell; there was no way of telling but by trying; it was, as Cardinal Newman says, "a leap in the dark," but one that reason, conscience, and the voice of God required. It must come in this way, I think, to all converts who have the common Protestant traditions.

I rang the priest's door-bell; he himself came to the door. "I want," I said, "to be a Catholic." I thought that was all; that he would do what was needed to make me one without delay. But of course he put me under instruction; gave me books, which I already was pretty well filled up with; but his instructions, his answers to my questions, did more good than all the books he could have furnished. But still the old practical obstacle remained till the very end: "What if the priest himself be insincere? how do I know but that some things are being kept from me which will come out when it is too late?" Modern miracles made a special difficulty, not one that was going to turn me back now, for my mind was made up to go behind that veil and see. But did Catholics really believe in them? I was almost afraid to ask. The miracle of St.

Januarius was a thing I had to bring up, and I half-expected to hear that, at least, dismissed, as a superstition. And then did Father — himself really abstain from meat on Friday, or was this only something palmed off on the people? Strange to say, even after I was received, though very strict about the matter, I was shame faced about it, and did not know whether Catholics were really expected to be so.

I was baptized conditionally on the Feast of the Assumption, 1862, having been under instruction about six weeks. I had been an Episcopalian about three years and a half, and was a little over twenty-three years old. It took me a little time to get into Catholic ways and practices, but from the day of my reception till now, doubt of the Catholic religion in any point, small or great, has seemed as impossible, unreasonable, and absurd as doubt about the truths of algebra or geometry. Religion, instead of being a mere matter of speculation or of enthusiasm, which one must not investigate too closely, has been ever since then to me the most certain, as well as infinitely the most important, of all the sciences.

MOLLY ELLIOT SEAWELL,

WASHINGTON, D. C.

Author of "The House of Egremont," "The Fortunes of Fifi," etc.

In the old country house, the Shelter, in Gloucester County, Virginia, where I grew up, there was a typical eighteenth century library. It had been partly selected for my great-grandfather by Thomas Jefferson, when he was minister to France. The eighteenth Century philosophers were all well represented in it, and also much English history, of the period when history was merely the expression of individual prejudices.

Everything in this library was strongly anti-Catholic. Contrary to this, however, my father and mother had much respect for the Catholic Church, my mother being especially inclined that way. I was allowed great liberty in reading, and from a very early age I read these books, which, of course, I only half understood. I soon noticed, however, that the Catholics were always represented as being in the wrong, in every religious and political collision. This seemed to my childish mind to be unjust, and I began to have a kind of sympathy with the Catholics.

When I was about fourteen, with a very precocious mind, I came across "Macaulay's Essays," which I devoured. Macaulay's denunciation of the Anglican Church made a deep impression upon me, as my family were all nominally Episcopalians, and my associations were solely with that communion. The two essays — one on Von Ranke's "History of the Popes," and the other on Henry Hallam's "Constitutional History" — suddenly gave me a new view of religious questions. I began to see that the Church which Macaulay said would be in full vigor "when the traveller from New Zealand, shall, in the midst of a vast solitude, sit on a broken arch of London Bridge to sketch the ruins of St. Paul's," was an enormous and living fact. I also began to appreciate dimly that in my own country the steady advance in education and enlightenment was closely followed by a corresponding advance in Catholicism.

Then, after Macaulay, I made acquaintance with Thackeray, whose leanings toward Catholicism in his later life were so marked as to give rise to the report that he died a Catholic. Certain it is, he had an extraordinary knowledge of Catholic ritual and language, which could only have been acquired by often attending Catholic worship; indeed, he is said to have habitually frequented Catholic Churches when he was on the Continent. It will be remarked that Thackeray seemed to have a grudge against the Anglican Church, and like An-

thony Trollope, he commonly made the Anglican Clergy in his books appear as being the most ridiculous, if not the most odious, of men. Witness the Reverend Charles Honeyman, in "The Newcomes," etc. His favorite characters, if his art permitted, were likely to turn up in Catholic Cathedrals, or even to be Catholics, while Father Holt, the Jesuit, is a most sympathetic portrait.

After having readily imbibed from Thackeray, as from Macaulay, his admiration and sympathy for Catholicism, I read Thackeray's noble tribute to the Catholic Church — "the stately structure of eighteen centuries, the mighty and beautiful Roman Catholic Church." The effect upon a young mind of these splendid tributes, from two great masters of English literature, may be imagined. I began to make inquiries about the church and to read all I could find on the subject, from my fifteenth to my eighteenth year. I asked Protestants many puzzling questions, to which they could give me no answer, such as the meaning of Christmas —"Christ's Mass" — which dated back into the shadow and traditions of the first Century after Christ. None of these Protestant friends could explain to me why they celebrated Christ's Mass without a Mass, and why the same prayer book which contained a special service for Christmas, also contained a declaration that the Mass was blasphemous and idolatrous. These questions, from Catholic books and teachings, received a prompt and logical answer. Thus I

found myself a Catholic, by the operations of my own mind, under God; and when I announced my intention, at the age of eighteen, of joining the Catholic Church, I had never even conversed with a priest.

I now put myself for a few weeks, under ecclesiastical instruction, and was then received into the Church.

The spirit of inquiry which made me a Catholic has never left me, and from that day to this I have been a constant reader of Speculative Philosophy and the history of religion. In the course of this reading, I have grown stronger in the Catholic faith. It has proved, according to my lights, to be the one practical system of philosophy which gives men mental peace, and which has, from the beginning, fed and clothed the poor, succored the orphan, taught the ignorant, and reformed the sinner. I have great respect for all Christian bodies; but, in their practical aspect, the Catholic Church as compared with the other Christian religions of the world, is like a regular army, ready for service anywhere, to a local militia.

I have observed that since the great schism of three hundred years ago, that as education and enlightenment advance, so the Catholic Church advances. In England, on the accession of Queen Victoria, 38 per cent. of the people of England could not read or write, and the Catholic Church was under prohibition. Now, when the number of

illiterates is very small, schools have multiplied and the whole Catholic hierarchy is completely established, as it was before the schism.

In America, the Church has had no such obstacles to contend against, and its progress has been still more rapid. The old superstition that the Catholic Church and liberty could not dwell together has been triumphantly refuted. It has placed no bar upon the most candid investigation, and for myself, having always been an investigator and reasoner to the extent of my abilities, I am and shall remain, a Roman Catholic.

HENRIETTA CHANNING DANA SKINNER,

BOSTON, MASS.

Daughter of the late Richard Henry Dana, Jr., and author of "Espiritu Santo," "Heart and Soul," etc.

It was a small thing that first started me on the path to Rome — a very small thing, indeed — no larger than a postage stamp. In fact, it was a postage stamp! My older sister was an ardent collector, and had many rare examples. One page of her book was devoted to "The Papal States." I was about twelve years of age when, in looking at this page, I noticed the papal arms and asked of my father the significance of the crossed keys. He explained that they referred to the claim of the Papacy to be founded on Christ's charge to Peter "On this rock I will build My Church, and I will give to thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven." I was so struck with the explanation that I immediately looked up the episode in the Gospels. I can recall now how the thought that the Church of Rome might perhaps be the historic fulfilment of those solemn promises almost took my breath away, and I turned to my father and cried "But what if the claim is true?" He was alarmed at the impression it made on me and hastened to give me the usual arguments — that the Eastern and Angli-

can churches denied that any more authority was given to Peter than was afterwards conferred on all the other Apostles; and that "the corruption of doctrine and morals in the Roman Church" put out of the question any claim to Divine foundation and guidance. I was to find later that this assertion of "the corruption of Rome" was insisted upon whenever any line of reasoning seemed to lead Rome-ward. "As Rome is corrupt, therefore no argument, however plausible, which leads to Rome can be sound, for a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit."

I was brought up in an atmosphere of religious controversy. My father and grandfather were converts to the Protestant Episcopal Church from orthodox Congregationalism. My aunt, Miss Charlotte Dana, was one of the early converts to the Catholic Church in Boston. She loved to say that she had come into the Church before Newman had made it the fashion. My mother was a Presbyterian. Nearly all of our relatives were either Unitarians or Congregationalists, while among our nearest neighbors and best friends were Irvingites and Swedenborgians. With all of these we discussed religion freely, except with our Catholic aunt. We were strictly forbidden to speak of religion or go to a Catholic service with her. My father was a strong High Churchman in his principles and was a founder of the church of the Advent — the pioneer of ritualism in Boston. I myself was confirmed at

this church in my fourteenth year. Later in the same year we went to Europe for a prolonged stay. The first Catholic church I ever entered was the cathedral at Brussels. There was a low Mass going on at the time and I watched it with some curiosity. But, having no idea what it was all about and hearing no words, I noticed only the many genuflections, the constant passing back and forth, the strange and apparently arbitrary and meaningless gestures and movements of the celebrant, and it all seemed to me as so much mummery. At the same time I recall that when passing a certain chapel where a lamp was burning (which I now know to have been the chapel of the Blessed Sacrament), I obeyed a strange impulse to follow the example of the passers-by and make a reverent genuflection before the Altar. It was my first act of Catholic worship, however ignorant and imperfect.

That year and the following I spent in Germany, where my most intimate friends were Catholics. I went twice with them to church. Once it was a low Mass, which impressed me the same way as before. The second time was Tenebræ, but it was a very simple service, intoned by the clergy, without organ or choir. My curiosity was satisfied, and at the age of fifteen I had decided that the Church of Rome had no attraction for me!

The third winter, that of 1873–74, was spent at the Convent of the Assumption in Paris. I was

then sixteen. My parents had stipulated that the nuns should not try to influence my religious convictions, that I should be allowed to sleep late, mornings, and not attend the daily Mass; that on Sundays I should take my own prayer-book to chapel, and that when religious instruction was given the pupils I should follow the class that was studying the Ten Commandments, as least likely to offer any doctrines that I was not in accord with. I remained at the convent eleven months. At first I was horribly homesick. The austere simplicity of the school, the regimental discipline, the lack of privacy — for we were never alone — filled me with dismay. I felt no attraction towards the religious side, as I did not understand it. If any of the nuns were especially kind to me I fancied they were trying to convert me and I shrank from them. I little thought that in a few months it would seem the dearest home on earth to me; for it was the home of the Blessed Sacrament. Every day from the earliest Mass in the morning till after Compline there was solemn Exposition and Adoration. Every afternoon at quarter of five the pupils all filed into chapel for Benediction, I among them. What it was all about I did not know. The French name of the service, "*Salut,*" conveyed no idea, and true to their promises the nuns made no attempt to explain it to me. It seemed to be another kind of mummery, that was all. At Mass on Sundays I took my Episcopal prayer-book and read the Com-

munion service, sometimes adding the Thirty-Nine Articles, to fortify myself against any possible incipient leaning towards Popery! But I knew enough of the Catholic Faith to realize that those about me believed in Transubstantiation, and I gradually came to feel a certain solemnity and awe at the moment of the Elevation. It was many months, however, before it dawned on me that the same Host I had learned to reverence at the Elevation was held up before me at the daily Benediction. It was like a sudden illumination. Yet the first effect of my new belief instead of drawing me to the Catholic Church, was to make me an ardent Ritualist. I fought against the idea of submission to Rome, but planned to throw myself eagerly into the Ritualistic movement and help to restore the Anglican and Episcopal Churches to the ancient Catholic faith and practices which they had undoubtedly been wrong in abandoning at the time of the so-called Reformation. The English Church should be "Catholicized but not Romanized," and if there was any doubt about Orders we should get them from the Eastern Churches and not from Rome. I was all aglow with loyalty and enthusiasm. But there was a leaven working. What Catholic devotions, what faith in the Real Presence, what the lovely influence of the nuns failed to accomplish was brought about in the apparent safety, neutrality and dryness of the advanced class in Catechism, studying the Ten Commandments according to the

teachings of Saint Thomas Aquinas and the Council of Trent. Here, at every step, teaching and defining in morals as well as faith, and commanding in matters of discipline that were not of faith but of obedience, here I found the Bark of Peter, steering with divine authority and infallible guidance across the stormy seas of sin and heresy! Here were the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, here was the Rock against which the gates of Hell should not prevail! Not suddenly, but very, very slowly, I came to realize that, not in the Anglican Church with orders denied by all but herself and rejected Mass and Sacraments — not even in the national Orthodox Churches of Greece and Russia in spite of their Apostolic Orders and Sacraments — was I to find the Church that was universal, and, above all, *One*. The keynote of unity and authority was *Rome!*

As soon as I saw where I was being led I felt in honor bound to let my father know. I was immediately withdrawn from the convent and taken to England, where I was shown the cathedrals and particularly the ritualistic churches, like those of All Saints', Margaret street, London, and the church of the Cowley Fathers at Oxford, where I was put under the instruction of Fathers Benson and Rivington, who both had long talks with me on the Anglican and Roman positions. The following year we returned to Boston. There my father laid down certain conditions which he required me to

observe faithfully for three years. His manner was kindly: he said he did not wish to persecute me, but that he could not consent to my becoming a Roman Catholic while I was under age, until he was sure that I was not being led away by undue influence or by the romantic enthusiasm of inexperienced youth. For three years I was to cease all correspondence with Catholic friends, I was never to mention to my Catholic aunt or to anyone my desire to enter the Catholic Church, I was to give up all Catholic books, pictures, medals, etc., in my possession, I was never to go inside of a Catholic Church, but must attend the Episcopal church with my family, I was to be instructed by Protestant clergymen that my father should appoint, I was to read conscientiously such books as he or they should indicate, and I was to finish my education at Protestant schools. If at the end of three years I had fulfilled these conditions honorably and still wished to become a Catholic he would no longer oppose me. I pleaded vainly for a test of one year, or two at the most. He was unrelenting. Had I known then, as I came to know later, all that the Church is to her children, all that the Sacraments mean to them I would never have consented to so long a test. But before one is a Catholic it is like taking a leap in the dark. The old prejudices die hard. Up to the last moment there is a kind of vague terror that it may all turn out a miserable mistake. Two things only stood out clearly and sus-

tained my spirit during this trial: trust in the Keys of Peter, and hunger for the Blessed Sacrament.

The first year my family took the course of simply ignoring altogether my religious desires, and I went with them regularly to the Church of the Advent, then under the charge of the Cowley Fathers, and already very ritualistic. The second year, my father put me under the instruction of one of the clergy of the Advent, now a bishop. He began by telling me at once that I must look upon my attraction towards Rome as a temptation of the Devil, and asked me to kneel down before him and take a solemn oath never to become a Roman Catholic, and never to make any inquiries toward that end. He promised that I should then find relief from the temptation. Naturally I refused to do anything so narrow and arbitrary, though I know of many persons who have unfortunately taken that oath. He then urged me to go to their communion, but I told him frankly that I did not regard it as a real sacrament or look upon him as a real priest, and that I could receive no grace from such an act. Finding that he must convince me, he wasted no time on side issues but went at once to the heart of the matter, and attacked the doctrine of Papal authority and infallibility. On all other points of Catholic doctrine he declared that he could agree with me. I listened to what he had to say and I read the books he gave me, though it was a weariness of the spirit to do so. But through

all the mazes of argument, two things always rose up before my mind: on the one hand Christ's promises to His Church, His prayer for its visible unity, His charge to Peter; on the other hand the historic papacy. Had either existed without the other it would be easy to explain away, but as long as they stood together — prophecy and fulfilment, each the complement of the other — they were the very foundation of Christianity.

My father then decided that I was receiving too much sympathy from Ritualism, and the third winter I was placed under the instruction of a bishop of Low Church views, who employed the usual arguments of the ultra-Protestant position. Beside those of the Ritualists, these arguments served as an object lesson in the inconsistencies tolerated within the Episcopalian fold.

I need not refer to the pressure brought to bear from variou sources as the end of my trial drew near. This was only natural and may be taken for granted in the case of every convert.

When the three years were up my father declared himself satisfied that I had fulfilled his conditions honorably. He had but one hope left — that was, that in attending Catholic churches and coming in contact with Catholics I might be disappointed and disillusionized, and be glad to return to the religion of my family.

(Note. I am glad to say that both my parents soon ceased to entertain these hopes, and in later

years even told me that they would not bring me back if they could, as they were convinced that I derived more happiness and consolation from my religion than they got from their own.)

I was instructed in Boston for my reception into the Church by the Jesuit, Father Edward Holker Welch, a convert who, as a young man had studied law in my father's office. My father himself took me to him for instruction, and I was to be received on the Feast of the Annunciation, 1878. But before the appointed time I was called at an hour's notice to Chicago by the illness of a married sister. I arrived there knowing absolutely no one, but armed with a letter to the Jesuit missionary, Father Verdin, who gave me conditional baptism in the Church of the Holy Family, on March 27, a stranger from the congregation standing for me. I afterwards made many delightful Catholic friends during the three months I remained in Chicago. I was prepared for my first Communion by the Ladies of the Sacred Heart at their North Side convent, and was confirmed and given communion by Bishop Foley on the first Friday of April, 1878, Miss Eliza Allen Starr acting as my sponsor.

Seeing the part that the Keys of Peter played in my conversion perhaps it was no mere coincidence that I had been born on one of the feast days of the holy Apostle.

E.L.S.,

NEW YORK CITY.

I have been a Catholic now, for thirty-eight years; and the thought that is oftenest in my mind is that out of all my family on either side, there is no account of an earlier conversion; and I am filled with gratitude to God for the favor, even though I have surely done nothing to warrant the selection.

After the lapse of so many years the incidents of my conversion are not vivid in my recollection, with the exception of a few that were out of the ordinary.

I hardly know how to characterize the special variety of Protestantism in which I was reared. My ancestors on my mother's side were Quakers; but through the accidents of life most of them finally landed in the Episcopal Church. My father's family was Dutch Reformed; and my Sunday-school education was had under those auspices. I knew nothing of doctrine or dogma, and was never taught any. The Bible and only the Bible, was the text-book, the end and aim of all we ought to know. In a vague sort of way, but with the utmost fervor I grew to believe it contained all that was needed. I presume I ranked with the every day Protestant, found in every denomination,

who differs in small particulars from any other Protestant, no matter of what denomination, but who agrees with every other Protestant in the important particular of disaffection, to give it no more violent name, towards that unaccountable infliction, the Roman Catholic Church.

My earliest recollection is of being taken into a church — St. Joseph's, in Sixth avenue, New York. I do not remember who took me. But it was often told me what a good nurse I had, although she was one of the foolishly devout kind and thought of nothing but her duty to her church — was forever going to church and spending her money there. When I heard this it meant nothing to me, but now as a Catholic, I know that her prayers were directed to heaven in my behalf and without doubt were heard and were among the causes of my conversion.

I cannot say that I had any concern whatever as regards the Roman Catholic Church, for many years; nor had I any thought of it except to ascribe to it as I was taught, all those bad things with which every one is so familiar, and which, indeed, are not believed except by the utterly ignorant. Nothing of interest happened, but once, when, with my wife and a Catholic lady I visited the church of St. Ignatius in Baltimore, and we three walked up a side aisle, I going whither I was led, not knowing or caring for the holy place I was in. The Catholic lady and my wife knelt before an

altar; but I stood stark, rigid, frozen, feeling it my duty to cast as far as I could by my outward demeanor, a rebuke upon such idolatry. Our Catholic friend lived to learn, later, of our conversion; but we never saw her again, leaving the city a few months later for good. Now she is in that place of refreshment, light and peace where she rejoices, so I believe, in her instrumentality in bringing about our conversion.

In the course of time I had become a member of the Episcopal Church, of the Low Church kind. This was abundant in my youth; in fact I do not recall anything that approached the so-called Anglican Church in the United States, of the sort called by some, Ritualistic, and by others, the Catholic Church, a branch of the True Church. The "Half Way House," in Hudson street, a High Church, from which so many Catholics have graduated, was not ornate in its worship, made no pretence not to be Protestant; and Dr. Seabury's, in Fourteenth street, the highest of the high churches, which the unseated Bishop Onderdonk attended, was certainly both plain in its worship and avowedly Protestant. But I drifted toward the Low Church variety of Episcopalianism that had its headquarters at St. George's, in Stuyvesant Square, the Rev. Dr. Anthon being its rector at the time. I was also fond of the service at Dr. Muhlenburg's, the Church of the Holy Communion.

Later when the Rev. Dr. Ewer introduced his red

cassocked corps of altar boys, and the Church of St. Alban in New York began the saying and singing of "mass," I attended both these places and came away fully satisfied that one might change his clothing, and still be the same man nevertheless.

So I remained during my early manhood and our early married life. After Baltimore, we came to Brooklyn, where I joined a Low Church, doing my best, and sparing no pains, to assist in the work usual in that following. I was fairly successful and might have continued not to have any special interest in the discredited Roman Catholic Church, if it had not been for a sermon preached in my hearing, by the Rev. Mr. C——, a pleasant speaker, of the extreme Evangelical pattern that suggests personal infallibility. He touched, incidentally, upon the interest which was then beginning to be taken in Roman Catholic affairs, and the curiosity that was invading pious Protestant circles, to learn for one's self what that Church taught. He said many hard things I do not now recall, and dropped the subject with the very familiar lines of Pope:

> Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,
> As to be hated, needs but to be seen;
> Yet seen too oft, familar with its face,
> We first endure, then pity, then embrace.

In all my life, with all the bad things said against the Roman Catholic Church, that had resulted in my disaffection towards it, (almost my hatred of it), I had never yet heard such a characterization.

It seemed at once to rule it out of any consideration except as the ally of hell. It rankled in my mind. It seemed to me that for once the Church was the "under dog," and was entitled to sympathy. I never could quite get into the habit of classifying Catholics as bad simply because they were Catholics; and yet if my reverend preacher was to be believed, that was the entire truth — the Catholics themselves, priests or laymen, might be good; but the horrible organization known as the Church, must be as fatal to the repose of immortal souls, as the domain of hell itself. So I risked the threatened danger of a compromise with the Monster Vice, and undertook to find the truth. I disclaimed any exterior aid; in fact I kept my own counsel as far as I could. I felt competent to decide for myself, and I did. After a few years I became a Catholic and my wife followed me. By the grace of God I remain one here, and my wife is one in Paradise.

This is my story, divested of the minor incidents of becoming convinced of the truth of Catholic Dogma. I regard that as unimportant. If the Church is of God, nothing that the Church propounds can be aught but from God, and must be believed. The very first question to be settled is — have I the right of private judgment or have I not, in matters of faith? And the next is — what ecclesiastical body in all the world has the deposit of faith, given to it by Almighty God? When

those questions are settled, as settled they are, in favor of the Roman Catholic Church, there remains nothing for me to do but to say — "I believe, help Thou mine unbelief," to that hierarchy that has the precious deposit, insured by the promise of Christ to remain with his Church to the consummation of the world.

So then, with this spirit, I was not seriously troubled about the necessity of assenting to Roman Catholic dogma. Every dogma became to me like an arithmetical problem. Two and two make four and not three or five or any other quantity. So with the evident and incontrovertible facts relating to every dogma, there followed no conclusion but the one which those facts indicated and which the Church adopts.

So, too, in this little statement of my conversion I believe it quite unnecessary to tell the petty story of my difficulties over dogma. Many a mind surrenders intellectually to the claims of the church and still will not openly assent. What, then, is needed? Why, the grace of God. Nothing is accomplished without it. The Faith is not gained without it, is not held without it; and without it heaven is not reached. When you have it say, "My God, suffer me not to lose this precious gift."

WILLIAM H. SLOAN, ESQ.,

CITY OF MEXICO, MEXICO.

The writer of the following sketch was born in Fort Washita, Indian Territory, Sept. 4, 1843. His father, Surgeon Wm. James Sloan, was an officer in the U. S. army. Young Sloan was left at an early age to struggle with poverty and hardship in the new territories of the far West, and grew to manhood with little opportunity to secure even a common school education. In Santa Fe, New Mexico, he attended school for awhile under the Christian Brothers, and always spoke of them with affection. At the breaking out of the Civil War he went with his widowed mother to Kansas City, Mo., and there acquired a knowledge of the printer's trade. He served at the same time in the "Home Guard," a military organization formed for the protection of the city against the possible attacks of Confederate forces. He afterwards removed to Leavenworth, Kansas, and in the closing year of the war enlisted in the Seventeenth Kansas Volunteer Infantry, a regiment that was mustered out after five months of service. He now began to long for an education, and after a preparation of a few months, during which time he united with the Baptist church, he entered the University of Rochester, N. Y., in 1866. In order to provide the means necessary for his schooling in that institution, he worked at night as a compositor on one of the city dailies. He received aid also from his mother, and from an educational society that contributed to the training of young men who sought an education for the ministry. He graduated in 1870 with honors, married a young woman who is still his wife, and entered the Rochester theological seminary to fit himself to be a preacher of the Gospel. A year or two later he was ordained to the ministry in Walworth, N. Y., while still pursuing his studies in Rochester. In 1873 he settled at Marion, N. Y., where he remained until the spring of 1875, when he went out as a

missionary to Burmah, assuming charge there of the publishing house belonging to the Baptist sect. His wife's health failed, and he sent her back to America, with three little children that had been born to them. He followed a year later, and during the voyage home was shipwrecked on Cape Matapan, Greece, when all the passengers but himself were lost. He visited Italy, and with other Americans was received in audience by Pope Pius IX, who congratulated him upon his escape from the sea. Rejoining his family in Rochester, N. Y., in 1878, he was immediately called to the pastorate of the Baptist church in Canadaigua, N. Y., where he remained only a year or so, and was then called to Albion, N. Y. Here he spent five years. In 1884 he was sent as a missionary to Mexico, where he has labored ever since, with the exception of four years spent as a pastor in Toledo, Ohio.

Mr. Sloan was the General Superintendent of Baptist work in Mexico, and during the twenty-two years of that service he erected four churches, published a newspaper in the Spanish language, and was the author of a number of books. His Concordance to the Holy Scriptures is, perhaps, the most complete work of its kind in any language. A volume for the use of students for the ministry, prepared during his leisure hours, is used in several Protestant theological schools as a text-book. Since leaving the Protestant ministry and uniting with the Catholic church, he has continued to reside with his wife and a little grandchild in the City of Mexico, where he has engaged in secular pursuits.

My life has been so full of movement and activity, subjected to so many and varied experiences, that it is not easy for me to state the character and origin of the different influences that led me to abandon the drifting forces of Protestantism and adopt the stable faith of the Catholic Church. But there are some things that stand out very clearly in my experience that may be of benefit to those who peruse these pages, and who, with single eye,

may be looking for the truth as it is in Christ. May the dear Lord, our Heavenly Father, help such, as He helped me, to find rest and peace in the Church that He founded.

In my early years I saw something of Roman Catholicism, while living in the Far West, and a sense of gratitude for some school training that I received for a short time in Santa Fe, New Mexico, begot within me a desire to join that Church; but the feeling soon passed away, and after I had an opportunity to enter a Protestant missionary school I became thoroughly impregnated with the sentiments entertained by the sects, so numerous and parti-colored in character that no room was left in my young mind for any faith of distinct and stable form. As years passed on I grew up without any religious training. My father had been a member of the Protestant Episcopal church, my mother a Campbellite. No restriction was placed upon me so far as my spiritual nature was concerned, although my mother was diligent in bringing me up to be "a good boy." I think I never caused her to reprove me for vicious conduct, and I owe her never ending gratitude for guiding me as firmly as she did, although she omitted religious training from her scheme.

When, somewhat late in life (I was twenty-seven years old), I entered a theological school in Rochester, N. Y., I had studied religious questions very little. I had joined the Baptist Church in Kansas

City, Mo., in 1865, moved largely thereto, I think, by social considerations and the eloquent preaching of a pious Baptist divine, and I felt strongly inclined to be a preacher myself. I was sincerely anxious to do good in the world, to save souls, and even to be a missionary to foreign lands. The question of "authority" had not yet begun to trouble me; I had been "led to Christ," and with reference to every question that I asked concerning duty, I was advised to "pray much" and "search the Scriptures." I did both, but failed to notice as yet that others who followed the same advice went in a different direction from myself and from one another. They consulted the same "authority," but traveled individual paths. I had not yet learned that the individual judgment was really the supreme arbiter in Protestantism.

But doubts began to manifest themselves to my mind during my course in the Theological Seminary. My teachers were godly, educated men, and they gave me efficient instruction; but they could not *guide* me, nor indeed did they attempt to do so. And yet I longed to have some one speak to me with a tone of authority, to produce within me a sense of security. I was always thrown back upon myself as the interpreter of what I read and studied, and as I was drifting along with Protestant people I naturally interpreted in the Protestant way whatever fell into my mind. I studied church history always from the Protestant stand-

point, and was given to understand that the Writings of the "Fathers" were exceedingly "commonplace," "of no special value to the student," "highly colored with the sacramentarian views that early crept into the church," etc., etc., until I became quite convinced that any reading of those ancient authorities would be time thrown away. Every novelty and heresy of the early days, however, we studied at length, until we were sure that the minority was always in the right and the majority always in the wrong.

Then after a few years I went out with wife and two babes as a missionary to Burmah, assuming the direction of the mission treasury and of a somewhat extensive printing establishment. I increased my library in the department of church history, and read a number of authors whose collations of facts relating to the first three centuries were a revelation to me. But I was not yet disposed to "let go the Scriptures," as I called it, and so kept on in the tenor of my way, satisfied to believe that even if the church to which I belonged was not to be found in the early times, it was certainly founded after the New Testament model, and that was all that Protestants cared for.

I returned to America and settled down in New York State, and for awhile experienced a revulsion of feeling with regard to the Catholic church. Occasionally I would attack it in sermons, I lectured about it, painting in lurid colors its awful doings,

its hideous superstitions, the depravity of its clergy, the ignorance of its people, its attempts to steal the control of the Government, the shameless life of its convents, etc. These are stock subjects with the Protestant ministry, and never fail to bring out full audiences. One learns these things in the histories he studies, and even the text-books of the common schools are not always free from them. Those things are in the air that the Protestant breathes, and he grows to believe that the worst thing that could happen to the country would be the preponderance of the Roman Catholic Church.

Years passed on: I did not see clearly enough to break away from church, social and domestic relations. I seemed to be tied to what I was, and I did my duty to my charges as best I could. In 1884 I came as a missionary to Mexico, and was destined to spend another twenty years in mental struggle before I came out into the full light and liberty of the gospel of Christ. I must study more, come face to face with Roman Catholicism, look at it minutely in all its phases, read its own authors who were the only ones who could properly interpret it to me, and then God helping me, I would decide what duty was. But I must also go down into the waves of sorrow and anguish of spirit, before I could be deemed worthy to come before the Most High and be received as His erring child.

They were years of struggle. I fought Ca-

tholicism by day, and studied it by night. And yet, singularly enough, I said nothing bitter, I even opposed the nasty things said and published by my colleagues, and I was uniformly the friend of the Catholic. Other things, too, were at work in my mind to bring about a change of belief; I refer to the multitudinous differences of doctrine and practice among the Protestants, the constant wrangling of sects and missionary societies, the inconsistent lives of those who have left the Catholic church for the Protestant, the preponderance of women in missionary work, the unfair treatment of many missionaries by the Boards who send them out, all these compelled me often to ask the question, Can all this be of divine institution? Is this what God wants? Does the Holy Spirit indeed guide these people, or are they guided by misled, if unconscious, egotism, and a desire to live a comfortable worldly life on a sufficient salary? But I dared not criticise, nor do I so at this time, for I was in the same boat with them.

The old difficulty came to me, By what authority am I trying to persuade these people to give up the faith of their fathers? No church has given me any authority to do so, the missionary Board is not a New Testament institution, and does not pretend to be so. Did Christ send me? If He did, how is it that a hundred others around me claim such authority, and yet each one leads the people away along a different road? What is truth? This be-

came the agonizing cry of my heart, and I besought God to show it to me. For it was not only among the multi-colored Protestant churches that I found different creeds and practices, but often in the same church there would be a score or more of religious differences. In churches of which I had myself been pastor, we had close-communion Baptists, Open-communion Baptists, Land-mark Baptists, Baptists who did not believe in baptism at all, Campbellites, Mormons (one family), Spiritualists, Annihilationists, Quakers, Unitarians, Universalists (a good many), Christian Scientists, and others. I do not mean to say that these people had abjured those views in order to become Baptists; they held these views while Baptists, and some of them never failed to advocate them when opportunity offered. The same thing is true of nearly every large Baptist church in the United States to-day. As pastor I could argue with these people, I could advise them to abandon those views, I could induce them sometimes to "study the Scriptures more," in order to find out the truth as I held it, but, alas, I had no *authority* to lay before them a distinct message and require their adhesion thereto.

I turned with renewed zeal to the study of the Bible, after having gone over the field of church history quite extensively, and I now sought to know what *Scriptural* foundation the Catholic church had for its faith and discipline. I labored

for seven years on the preparation of a Concordance to the Holy Scriptures, and I scrutinized every text that could bear upon the subject I had in hand. I found the authority of the Church as "pillar and ground of the truth," the Primacy of Peter, the power of the priest to forgive sins, Transsubstantiation, the efficacy of the Sacraments, and one or two others, to be so clearly taught in God's Word, that I dared no longer close my eyes to the truth. Once I was convinced of the truth that ultimate authority lay in the Church, and that she was the inspired interpreter of Holy Writ, the rest followed as a natural consequence. The Holy Spirit said to me: "This is the way; Walk ye in it."

It was more difficult for me to accept the discipline of the church, its ceremonies and ritual, but here again I was aided by Him who guides into all truth when the seeker is willing to be led. Then came the question of obligation, the severing of old ties, the grieving of loved ones, the tears of wife and children that would flow because of my change of faith, the cutting off of every means of support for my family (for the Catholic Church would have no place for me), and the entire overturning of the old life and the adjusting of myself to a new one, a somewhat difficult thing for a man of sixty-four years of age. I consulted no one but God, talked with no man or priest, until I was about ready to stand publicly by my conscience. Then I called upon Father J. A. Reis, pastor of the Church

of San Lorenzo, City of Mexico, and later upon the Archbishop, whose pious advice given me only a short time before his lamented decease I shall never forget, and on the 20th of January, 1908, I was baptized by Father Reis, General J. B. Frisbie and Judge Ignacio Sepulveda being my sponsors. I have found "the peace of God which passeth all understanding."

JAMES FIELD SPALDING, S.T.D.

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS.

Author and Lecturer.
Late Rector of Christ Church.

I feel that I can add nothing to statements made long ago, as to my reason for becoming a Catholic, save to say that the motive stands out all the stronger with the passing years. If I may quote (with slight alteration) from the Introduction to my book *The World's Unrest and its Remedy* (Longmans, 1898),——

"It was the genuine authority which the Catholic Church proves herself to possess, set forth by thinkers like Saint Augustine among the ancients and Cardinal Newman among moderns, which made such strong appeal to me when brought to consider my obligation to truth. Although after my submission to the Church there followed a period of 'storm and stress,' the end reached, by God's mercy, was the peace which can be found only in the 'certainty and reality' of the Catholic faith.

"In now adding my atom of testimony to truth, I may possibly aid some who are weighing the matter, perhaps long tossed upon the waters of unrest, still striving and struggling. However many complications may arise in the minds of thinking

people as they face the great question, What and where is the genuine religion of Jesus Christ? — and there were never so many complications as to-day — more and more will it be found that but one organization in the world can satisfy, for but one conserves the essential idea of the Church, the Divine Institution, God's revelation speaking with His authority to men."

And the closing sentences of the book may best bear my message of cheer: — "It is little for one or many to meet trial, discouragement, opposition, persecution. It is a joy to suffer and endure for the truth of God. Nothing else is to be compared. Everything is at stake. If the Catholic religion is not the religion of Christ, it is nothing; if it is that religion, it appeals to all who come within its reach with the exclusiveness of truth. Those who heed the appeal will find the sure remedy for the world's unrest."

FRANK H. SPEARMAN.

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS.

Novelist.

Just why a certain shamefacedness should attend the effort to relate an intimate religious experience is not at first thought clear; but reflection may suggest that the instinct is a saving one and not too lightly to be disregarded. Any attempt of this kind, for instance, inevitably hints at preaching; in its analysis it pretty nearly *is* preaching; and this brings up a question at once embarrassing; which of us is fitted to preach? Again, while we may always be sure of the force of a good example, preaching is, for the most part, futile. Indeed it disheartens the preacher by pointing to him in advance, this distinctive failing; and is likely to leave him with the feeling that nothing but the truth behind his text should encourage him to proceed at all.

In looking back over five and twenty years I have felt at times a regret — it is not necessary to say how keen — that that which has seemed to me of all things in life most vital should not have appealed even to the least of my acquaintances and friends. The explanation follows of course, swiftly if not consolingly, on the regret and again raises the question: What might not a good example have

done in so many years, to lead others to believe? But to set a good example is very hard: to point a way, of any kind, so easy!

When, therefore, one is urged into a sort of Apologia there is sufficient ground for a sense of humility whether he be able to feel it or not. One thus placed will indeed wish that the story he has to tell were more likely to be of use to others: he may entertain grave doubts as to its being of use at all: but in telling it he will feel particularly obliged to put by tempting glosses and keep very close to the facts. To be permitted to speak at all in matters involving the claims of the Roman Catholic Church and the Christian philosophy is not to be considered other than a matter of the highest possible privilege.

When I say, then, that I came into the Church clinging to the hand of a woman it will readily be understood that I married a Catholic wife. Yet to dismiss the story with this mere statement, as I am aware might be done, would be to lose some of its significance. Conversions of this sort are not, I believe, uncommon; but if this were all, the results in all of these cases should be pretty much the same; whereas, they are markedly, even distressingly, different. What is easily lost sight of in such a matter is that as a means of Grace a Catholic wife — actual or prospective — can serve only to bring an enquirer to the door, so to say, of the Catholic Church. There is still the vital matter of working

out an understanding of a faith that must seem very new and strange: and upon the character of this working out everything depends. If it be thorough, the result will be at least staunch, if not always edifying, Catholicity; a conviction so deep-seated and compelling that it becomes a master-influence, a part and parcel of thought and life itself. If on the other hand the matter be only formally worked out, the conversion may result in a state worse than the first. The very working out process will take complexion largely from what a man brings to the study of the Church. In most instances, I think, it takes years for the convert to conceive anything like an adequate impression of the real majesty of this great and visibly Divine institution.

The lives of average American boys — and I was an average American boy — do not in their environment greatly differ. Temperament, however, disposed me very early to much reading. I read omnivorously, chiefly perhaps of fiction, but among other matter some history fell in my way. While the claims of some fiction to being history are always on the point of question, we need not cavil here over the claims of some history to being fiction: I mean especially to indicate such history as has to do with differences in the matter of religion. Easily moved — again through temperament — by cruelty of any sort, stories of cruelty appealed at once to me, and in my reading my earliest sym-

pathies were enlisted toward the victims of religious persecution by Roman Catholics. The next mental step very naturally was to attribute the misdeeds of the persecutors to the doctrines and practices of the Church itself. I should doubtless have reached, through mere confusion of ideas, a conclusion of this sort without aid. But the dishonest historian rarely leaves the reader unaided in these matters: he helps him rapidly along in his reasoning by doing his thinking for him. I was quite innocent, too, of knowing that these misdeeds — atrocious enough in themselves — were distorted and magnified a thousandfold by the ingenious malice of the narrators. Nor was I informed by these frank and dispassionate writers that the Protestant party could do, and upon fitting occasions had done, highly creditable jobs of its own in this line. As to the Protestant Reformation itself which I had come to look upon as a sort of divine Magna Charta of religious liberty, and which certainly has proved itself so admirable a Magna Charta of religious license, the suspicion that it was very largely a political movement lay as far from my mind as possible. Many years were to pass before I should come, for instance, to know that in the country of my own forefathers, good Queen Bess could have given her bloodthirsty sister Mary all sorts of points in the matter of burnings, hangings, drawings and quarterings: and before I should realize that the English Reformation movement

consisted in its underlying strength of what is popularly known in our day as graft — the grafters being engaged in a pious scheme to overthrow the Catholic authority in order to divide its accumulated property between a vicious royalty and a robber-baron following.

Cruelty, then, was the first and strongest of my impressions concerning the Roman Catholic Church and its doctrines and it came to me wholly through my reading: the springs of history were poisoned against me as they are poisoned against all inexperienced readers. In my home I received no encouragement for my views. My father and my mother never shared my alarm concerning the threatening tendencies of Roman Catholicism. My mother, a woman of unusually sane and even poise, sometimes startled me by saying that a Catholic might be as good a Christian as anyone. My father was frankly impatient at my horror stories; and I began to hear about this time with interest of an elder sister, whom I had never seen, that had become a Roman Catholic. This fact is the only one I can recall that might have influenced me towards the Church, but it could hardly have done so since I had grown to manhood before we two ever met. Going back still further in childhood I do recall a very slight something which while far from an influence has seemed in the light of the sequel, pleasing. In the little room where the first recollections of consciousness as a child come to me there

hung above my bed a picture of St. Augustine. It disappeared from the home with the accidents of time, and so long ago that I cannot recollect when I missed it. But I do very distinctly remember the old-fashioned portrait in its quaint oval frame, and I recall that a little prayer in the form of a verse was printed under it. The substance of the prayer I have forgotten though my mother must have read it to me more than once. But I have often wondered how a picture of St. Augustine found its way into a home so far removed from the influences of the Church from which he himself was long so far; and to which he also one day yielded and in which he shone so long with so great a light to others. It is but fair to say that I never suspected St. Augustine of Catholicism: and the only picture of a Pope that ever fell under my early notice was contained in an old wood-cut in a copy of Pilgrim's Progress. In this, the Pope, chained within a cave beside a second toothless giant named Pagan, grinned helplessly at Christian marching rather blithely by — and not nearly so much alarmed at the situation as I was.

My parents, originally in Delaware of Methodist stock, were affiliated in the west with the Congregational Church and I had always taken interest in religious matters. During these early years I was under genuinely good influences — influences of a real Christian kind, the old-fashioned, simple, evangelical kind; and it is a regret that such

a faith as I then saw and knew in the lives of those of my own community, and others like it, was not able to withstand the rather contemptible rationalistic storms of the thirty years that have passed since. Unhappily its house was built upon the sand and the waves that have washed during that time and in the same way quite helplessly against the Catholic rock have undermined and washed the other away forever. The spectacle of a Christian faith struggling to hold to the Bible alone is, when watched for the years of one lifetime, sufficiently pathetic: but the spectacle of such a faith going to pieces before the "discoveries" of certain eminent scholars concerning the Bible is sad indeed. My mother died: my father I had already lost. It was my mother's wish, and my desire as well, that I should join the church and after her death I was received into the Congregational communion by an affectionate pastor. I was then about sixteen years old. My young pastor was delicate in health and is long since dead. I was his firstfruit he told me prettily; and though he would then have been greatly shocked to look this far into my future I hope he is now well reconciled to the long journey that I have taken. At eighteen, I was well out into the world and with nothing fixed or definite in religious discipline to hold me, had easily lapsed into indifference. In my reading I had become interested at this time in the brilliancies of the French Encyclopedists — we used to hear more of them then than

now — and I was, in matter of fact, superficially agnostic. In the large city, however, to which I had been drawn I made my home with a Roman Catholic family. Perhaps this was through a special Providence, and though the influence did not consciously move me at the time, it served afterward. I have spoken of the force of a good example: possibly this is the place to say that when the time of indecision finally and disquietingly came, one of the factors in strengthening me on the road toward Rome was the edifying life of Catholics whom I had intimately known. I left these influences within two or three years and others making in quite another direction succeeded. Still afterward, I was again brought, as I have said, through the nearness of my marriage, face to face with the claims of the Roman Catholic Church.

I had no idea even then of becoming a Catholic, but having been generously accepted as I was — I had, of course, been baptized — it came to me after a time that the least I owed to this Church, which had, as it were, reared in the womanly virtues her whom I had asked to be my wife, was to examine into its claims upon my own allegiance.

Then it came about that the strength of my early impressions was, to my confusion, sharply revived. I was armed, so to say, at all points against Catholic truth. I was armed it is true with a quiver of poisoned historical arrows but I had great confidence in them. Added to this perhaps vague but

deeply fixed impression of cruelty was a second impression that Catholic practice savored of a forbidding credulity. Modern miracles were a stumbling-block to me and a serious one. Skepticism is usually tinged with contempt and my attitude on this point, either consciously or subconsciously, was one of contempt for the vagaries of the Catholic belief. Fortunately, I did not concern myself with matters that I was even less competent to question — such for instance as the Papal Infallibility. Development of doctrine was quite too academic a matter to concern me; and as for dogma in general I did not know the difference between the Immaculate Conception and the Virgin Motherhood. My position toward Catholicism was, broadly, one of suspicion and contemptuous distrust, based on the consciously superior, not to say insolent, attitude of reading and thought on that subject among English-speaking Protestants. What a moral astigmatism it has impressed upon our English-speaking views of life! And the heavier the error of refraction the more complacently we rest within our gallery of distorted images. The fatuity of it all is at times startling.

It was, then, upon a vague and general indictment based on particulars such as these that I haled the great Christian Church into my rather sorry court to plead for itself. It is depressing to recall all of this; somewhat embarrassing to set it down. But it was perhaps fitting that the forefront of my

charges against the Mother of all Mercies should have been cruelty: and that I should have asked the venerable guardian of all that is precious in human knowledge to be good enough to explain to me the cause of her own salient ignorances and defects. However, the august Mother had learned humility long before I sought to humiliate her, and had long been accustomed to pleading for her Master before tribunals almost as unworthy as that to which she was then summoned.

A further matter, merely personal, seemed to interpose an obstacle in my road. I was a Mason and the order was interdict. The incident would hardly be worth mentioning save for the fact that it did interpose a difficulty and that it has done so in the case of many others. I had become a Mason in the most natural way in the world and as many young American men do. My old home had long been broken up and I had formed no new one. Having no fixed abode and being much of the time among strangers, the order seemed to afford a certainty of friends in the event of illness or emergency; and I asked a very dear friend to present my name for membership and was received very cordially into a little country-town lodge. When I thought of becoming a Catholic and found I could no longer remain a Mason I was in perplexity. Our American small-town lodge was never, it should be said, exercised in plotting against the Church. Its business was punctiliously to observe its rit-

ual — registered, it is true, in sufficiently terrible oaths, but no one took them over-seriously: to order its fraternal charities, and chiefly, as I remember, to have a good time in receiving new members and matters of that sort. The atrocities of the unspeakable Continental bands of the same order — avowedly atheistic and openly depraved — were quite outside our ken. From the Masonic side of the question there was in my case, no apparent reason why I could not belong both to the Church and to the Order. But the Church knew, better than I, that here a vital principle was at stake. That an oath with so broad an obligation of secrecy as the Masonic ritual enjoins is not to be trifled with: that it has led to many and serious abuses and may at any time do so again: that it has no place in the Christian discipline, none in the Christian philosophy. I do not mean to say that I was clear on this broader view at the time. What I realized instinctively was that Masonry was nothing vital in my life, whereas the matter of the choice of a religion was extremely vital. Lodge affiliations are as nothing, either on the side of restraint or extension when compared with any attempt to live out the Catholic discipline. One is child's play, the other, to use the forcible American expression is, "business." That chiefly which worried me was: What will this brotherhood think of me as a seceder, a renegade? However, when the time came, I dropped out — on the practical ground, as I have

said, of weighing the vital against the non-vital. The position of the Church, I realized I could not competently question. It had had the experience with this and countless other secret orders during many centuries: I had not. It knew: I did not know. If I could accept its sanction in other matters certainly I had no adequate reason for refusing to accept them in this. I ceased to be a Mason. What the order thought of me I do not know. I do know they would have thought more of me had I withdrawn formally and in an open and manly way. But not all of us are born with moral courage and to many it comes very late. I do not know how old St. Peter lived to be: but it seems to me that even without the miraculous strengthening of the Holy Ghost in that memorable descent, he would have lived to outgrow a possible repetition of the pitiful denial of his Master. One would think that he must have grown in time to where he simply could not make that mistake if confronted again. And it is to be remembered that he traveled much farther on *his* road to Rome after the death of his Master than before. Most of us like to avoid not alone imminent dangers but embarrassing formalities and possible unpleasantnesses. To those who, situated as I was, dread breaking ties in interdict orders for fear of the loss of temporal advantages or of business or of friends, I can say with the confidence of experience that these matters are bugbears: when the step is taken they come to nothing.

No friendship worth preserving will be lost to any man through following his convictions in professing the Roman Catholic faith: and if this were the place to pay a tribute to true friendship I should only have need to say that he who first presented my name to a Masonic lodge still remains after the test of these many years my earliest as well as one of my dearest friends.

But I have said, this was an obstacle merely personal and I recall it only to beg of those similarly embarrassed to remember that it is at worst but a minor point; and that it should never in any of its phases be allowed to grow beyond its true minor perspective.

To get back to the real question that was seriously before me: Can I, I asked myself, take on Roman Catholicism? To decide this I must of necessity seek Catholic books and advisers. If I had it to do over again, in what an orderly and seemly way could I not proceed! But a young American man of business strenuously engaged in temporal affairs and chiefly occupied with getting on in this world, nor over-solicitous as to what should happen to him in the next — if indeed there were any next, a fact that he was disposed to concede but did not care to insist upon — such a one could hardly be expected to approach a grave religious question in the manner of an academic personage. What stands most clearly out of the new body of confused impressions that came to me at that time is the in-

fluence of one personality, that of John Henry Newman. It was, it seems to me, Newman — kindly, serious, patient, and consoling as the great Church itself — who most smoothed the way for me to understand. I read his Apologia. It is the story of a road to Rome as far removed as possible from that which I could expect or hope to travel — the story of the intimate working of the mind of a great and learned divine. No doubt much of it I failed to grasp: possibly pages and pages of it were not written for me, but there were, I am sure, things of importance in it that I did grasp. For example, from Newman's story I got my first glimpse of the heart of a boy entirely innocent; and I was able to compare it with the heart of another boy that I knew. Here, curiously enough, was a starting point for thought. Here was an innocence to which I had grown, if I had not always been, a stranger. And I believed Newman: he convinced me. Rousseau never did this: the "Confessions," to me, bore the stamp of insincerity. During the earlier period in which I had read them I simply did not believe the professions of Jean Jacques. If, indeed, he did tell everything he is entitled to the crown which he industriously spent his life in hammering out for himself. But I never could satisfy myself that Rousseau made what Catholics term a good confession.

As to Newman, I was disposed on the very strength of this novel and innocent candor to listen

to the grave man. Disposed to listen! How much that means. How much depends on what confidence we put in the teacher. Others, very many others, than Newman could have led me, for the Mother of Saints is never without instruments to guide enquirers: it was Newman chiefly, I think, who did. He softened my suspicions and disarmed my distrust: and as another great teacher afterward did for me in another great field, brought my ignorances home to me, so graciously, so delicately, that they became, as it were, ashamed and slipped away unperceived. Then he left me to myself.

On the subject of miracles I found that my difficulties were based, as nearly as enquirers' difficulties are, on mere misapprehension of Catholic doctrine. I learned that the only miracles that were " of faith " were those miracles recorded in the Bible or necessarily deduced from the deposit of faith. To anyone who believes that Christ is God there is obviously no difficulty in receiving the record of His miraculous power. Upon the Divinity of Christ I had always hung the first link in the chain of my faith. It has never been other than a matter of instant recognition and acceptance to me that this Man was different, not in degree but in kind from all other men. Toward later miracles, then, my attitude when I entered the Church was naturally one of suspicious skepticism. It is needless, almost, to say that many years and the Catholic viewpoint have greatly softened this. I was asked on becoming a

Catholic to accede on this point to only one proposition: that in the life of the Church, miracles always had been and always would be possible: but that the authenticity of any particular miracle is a matter of evidence. I approached Catholic enquiry with a very poor opinion of the tribunals before which questions of authenticity are brought. It is hardly necessary to add that subsequent familiarity with Catholic procedure has led me to a very high opinion of such tribunals. And as to the matter of miracles in the life of the Church itself, its history so abounds in them and they are in so numberless cases thoroughly attested that I could only look upon myself as utterly crass if I still shook my head at them. They are matters concerning which I cannot possibly have first-hand knowledge but upon which, men who, to put it as mildly as possible, are quite as competent as I am to judge, have passed judgment: and who in no instance seek to compel my belief in their findings but having given them on incidents of a nature always difficult to determine leave me free to accept or to question. One would think that a reasonable man could hardly ask more.

Devotion to the Blessed Virgin was, of course, with me a sore, not to say offensive, point in the Catholic practice. And the unfortunate Saints! God will surely recompense them in some way for the lively suspicion with which they are regarded by non-Catholics. Fancy the feelings of St. Alphonsus Liguori at the indictments that have been

drawn sternly against him! And it would seem that the distance to which the sects have variously wandered from the teachings of real Christianity may accurately be measured by their attitude towards devotion to the Blessed Virgin, or "Mary" as she is familiarly known *not* by her friends. To invoke the most favored servants of God that they may join us in asking for the petitions we lay before Him — how odious hatred has made the beautiful custom wherever it has had a chance to blind the human heart to Catholic truth! The white prayers of the just — living and dead — how consoling the thought that we can enlist them to plead with ourselves for our unworthiness! But in the chilling wastes of non-Catholic Christianity how conscientiously the unfortunate suppliant turns his face from these faithful children of our common Father, as if the very odour of their sanctity were an offense, and stonily sets about his petitions heedless of their loving sympathy. Yet those over-scrupulous sinners who cannot countenance an appeal to the saints for intercessory prayers quite commonly ask one another for prayers of the very same sort. Certainly, I may be permitted to say, when once I had freed myself from prejudice, it did not take exceptionally hard thinking to convince me who had the better of this question of devotion to the Mother of God and to His saints.

Those that know Catholic truth — even many of those that do not — will already have perceived the

futility of my chief objection to it. Cruelty is a matter serious enough. It is, indeed, so serious that a just man will exercise every effort not unjustly to attach this odium to any person or institution. When I came to discriminate — as even a slight consideration must force me to do — between the sins of unworthy Catholics and the doctrines of the Catholic Church itself I saw that upon the charge of cruelty, at all events, the ground was slipping from under me. I was reminded very kindly that Christ had never promised perfection to human nature, nor that scandals should not arise among his followers. The question left for me to thrash out was, to what were these cruelties, real and alleged, due: to the doctrines of the Catholic Church or to human nature still unregenerate? There could be, there can be, but one issue here and but one answer. The Church of Christ has never been, I was to learn, other than all merciful. It is not alone that its spirit has been that of mercy, but that its teachings become, the more deeply they are studied, most wonderful of all in the depths of their mercy. To take one passing instance out of many that might suggest themselves, who was there to tell me, before I began to study, that it is of Catholic doctrine that we are not permitted to say that a soul is lost? That no matter how depraved the life may have been, no matter how abhorrent the transgressions of human and divine law it is still of the Catholic belief that a merciful possibility remains:

and that in the very last moment of such a life, even during a flash of consciousness in a death of repulsive delirium, there still may come, unseen by the closest observer, an instant of perfect contrition to save that soul from eternal damnation. I offer but this instance of what has so struck me in this regard. As to cruelty, men there have been, no doubt, within the Catholic Church sufficiently infamous; but if kings, rulers, prelates or priests have disgraced their profession of its faith by enacting or countenancing savagery they are simply answerable where we shall all one day be answerable — not for the sins of others but for our own.

It is really curious that because Catholics have committed murder we should charge murder upon the teachings of the Catholic Church. We do not follow these accusations against it, as we logically should, through the decalogue. No one asserts, because a Catholic may steal, that the Catholic Church conducts a novitiate for pickpockets. The Christian religion — and here I use the term as identical with the Catholic Church because experience teaches that none of the sects exercise over their followers anything approaching the control exercised by the Catholic Church over its followers — the Christian religion, I say, has to do with a human nature possessing a propensity almost incredible for wrongdoing. Though, indeed, there is a limit it would seem that it must often have been passed by Christians. But to admit that Christianity has not always made

saints of men is in no way to disparage its truths. And thus it is, I repeat, that the whole miserable subject of religious persecution has nothing proper to do with religious truth. The causes of the former lie deep in the least tolerable qualities of human nature itself. Those things most inhuman are paradoxically most human. In the matter of religious zeal — if we consider that alone — it always has been and always will be easier to smite off the ear of the servant of the high priest than to watch for one hour in the garden of Gethsemane; but the rewards are sure to be something radically different. In matter of fact the more deeply one goes into the inquiry of religious persecution, insofar as it affects the claims of the Catholic Church, the more will he come to realize that it is a scarecrow dressed up for his disedification. The sum of the matter has been outrageously exaggerated; the lying about it has been as relentless and implacable as its pictured ferocities; and in the end it will be found that the Church itself has when possible alleviated its horrors and when impossible protested against them. It is a bogy which at its worst should deceive no one: has nothing relevantly to do with the case: and puts on the enquirer's shoulders nothing to apologise for but the sins of individual Catholics. For that matter, if he begin to apologise for sin at all, he will find, with even indifferent industry, quite enough out-

side the question of Catholic claims and religious persecutions to busy him very comfortably.

In speaking with frankness as I have done in this matter I do not for a moment lose sight of that maxim containing so much of human as well as of divine wisdom, "By their fruits ye shall know them." The Church of Christ may well on the last day bring its fruits before its Master to prove its identity. Who, indeed, shall speak in the presence of those legions of Catholic Christians who from the greatest to the least of earth have given themselves as missionaries, martyrs, virgins and confessors to its work? The honor roll of the Roman Catholic Church! What a silence its august centuries impose upon the detractor.

Unhappily the enquirer knows nothing of this greater side of the Church. The very atmosphere of his religious surroundings differs in composition from that which he will find within the Church. Non-Catholic Christianity exploits the individual. Catholic Christianity while never, let it be marked, effacing him, subdues the individual to his proper perspective. The brilliant preacher, always the life and sap of the evangelical tree, becomes upon the Catholic tree merely the leaf that he should be: Christ never sought out brilliant preachers to do His work. There is room in the Catholic Church for every species of rightly directed human energy and activity and for every admirable type of human intellect — and they are all to be found busily en-

gaged within it. In the shreds and patches of Christian doctrine to be seen in the teachings of even the most grotesque of the sects there is nothing that may not be seen in its purity in the Catholic belief: there is nothing praiseworthy in all of their practises not already exemplified, and in manner incomparably more praiseworthy, in the Catholic practise. But to realize this requires some little, but vital, reading and some years of observation and deduction. The realization of how miraculously Jesus Christ and the Church He left have modified human nature, drawn out of it its sting and made of it in countless instances an object of such marvel for our edification — this splendor dawns only gradually on the neophyte. But in the proportion that it does dawn upon him his intelligence may be said to be complimented and in that proportion he is strengthened and deepened in his veneration for the great Church that he has entered.

The perception of this comes to all converts, I believe, very slowly. Newman took seven years after he had become practically convinced before he made the momentous step, so much did he dread the possibility of a mistake. I went in, I should say, at the beginning of such a seven years; and I say this because I found afterwards so much to grow to. But I remember, pretty distinctly that first moment in which I was aware that the curiously dreaded change had come: when I re-

alized that the matter had been taken out of my hands — as I had long asked that it might be — and knew that from that moment I should profess a faith still very strange. Theology has somewhere a name for that moment of efficacious grace but it escapes me now. I recall very clearly the room, its loneliness, an open window, the silence of the night: It was the instant of final surrender. But why should it have been an instant of tears? Why should the beggar shaking off his spiritual tatters feel other than elated? Yet to rearrange one's mental furnishings, even if they be but rags; to give up one's body of views of conduct, his philosophy of life, if you will — for such little matters we share in common with the lunatics, not to say the other lunatics — these are not to be put away without something of a shock. But the change had come. I had risen for the last time out of doubt and for the first time into certainty.

I say certainty because the Roman Catholic Church and the Christian philosophy stand all the assaults of right reason. The convert may test them from any point of view. If an American, and hard-headed and practical, as he is in his business, he demand present-day evidences of what the Catholic Church is standing for, he has need only to measure up its position with the questions of the day. When I say the day, I should include all days, that ever have been and ever will be and in every country that the sun shines on, for the

Church always has had particular questions to meet and always will have. But to take those of our own day, who that is serious and thoughtful must not, after due consideration, take his place with Her on the question of divorce and the sanctity of the home: on that of socialism and anarchism and the definite rights of property and society: and on the pathetic blight of our childless marriages and families limited by unnatural practices?

Nor are these questions and many like them simple in nature and easy of solution. They are exceedingly delicate and complicated and in every instance the Catholic Church, one will find, meets them squarely. There is here no shuffling, no evasion, no refuge behind glittering phrases and flowing generalities. To speak broadly and reassuringly of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man and slip with a distinctly high attitude away from explicit responsibility will not do in Catholic theology. The Catholic Church must answer definitely back both to God and to the husband that covets another wife: to God and the outraged, embittered man that has revolted against the stony injustices of wealth: to God and the rebellious wife who shirking the office of motherhood pleads with angry sobs again to be allowed to stoop to that degradation of the concubine from which Christianity with so much of blood and tears lifted her up nineteen hundred years ago. And the

Catholic Church, unfalteringly, to these questioners and to God does answer back.

Fine phrases in such instances are absolutely valueless. When questions of sin are to be handled it is necessary to get down to the ground of cold, hard fact and to say, this you may, this you may not. And the Catholic Church must, as it does, get down to this ground and out of its divine authority speak plainly.

If it be thought that it uses uncertain tones on "delicate" matters and leaves "largely" to "one's own views" just what one may or may not do, consult the least of its many pastors and hear what he has to say. One may learn, as the advertisements say, something to one's advantage. And here it is in Catholic teaching that there is found so much to wonder at in the soundness of its wisdom, the breadth of its justice and the solicitude of its mercy.

Shall the answer of such questions be left to the individual conscience? That was the suggestion of the sixteenth century. Do the results satisfy? It was an experiment then; to-day, we have the object lesson. It is about us on every hand. In the sixteenth century declarations, everything was to be referred back to the Bible and the court of Christian appeal was to be discarded. No one has successfully proposed to do away with civil courts. But why not let every man walk about with a copy of the statutes under his arm and with

the advice that he interpret the provisions of each section according to the dictates of his own conscience? How long would human society endure such an experiment? How have the religious societies founded on this experiment endured it? Have they not, in fact, set aside the restraint they began with and for the most part pitched their book of statutes out into the roadway? With these societies, authority is not only discarded but pretty thoroughly disclaimed. Clearly, very clearly, this experiment was destined not to succeed. As a religious movement it has quite certainly passed the zenith of its strength; within our own generation it has entered its inevitable decline into agnosticism and loses in its new ground none of its early confidence. But in the life of the Church, the religious upheaval of the sixteenth century only suggests the formidable revolt of the Arians during the fourth and fifth centuries. To the Church these are but sad incidents in the story of Her cycles; and it is not to-day with Protestantism but with the results of Protestantism that She is called to combat and foes more formidable are again in the field. The sixteenth century experiment offers no ground for positive faith. Men still are seeking Christianity; and if one were asked to-day, "Why be a Catholic?" he would have warrant for answering quite definitively and with a question much more significant, "What else can I be?"

We easily find something to shrink from in the

mere idea of "joining" the Catholic Church. We make of the actual step a bugbear. But the simple and vital question, each to himself, is: Am I prepared to accept Christianity? If the question has come to you and the answer be yes, then the fact must frankly be recognized that to-day it exists nowhere, save in shreds and fragments, outside Catholic Christianity and you must go to the simplest of its priests and ask to be made Christian. When the baptism or confession or both, are done and the soul already lighter is made ready to receive the Blessed Eucharist the feeling will already have come upon you that you are entered into a new company: and that no matter how serious your own deficiencies, you are finally at one with those Christians who, eighteen hundred years ago, in Judea and on the shores of the Mediterranean spoke and taught. That as they stood then for the faith so you yourself must stand now for it or be forever shamed. The words Catholic and Catholicism will cease then to convey a reproach and human shame will give way to a generous pride; for of all earthly companies into which one may be admitted there is no company like to this.

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I found my way into the Church, after a period of utter disgust with the divisions of Protestantism, for which I could see no earthly reason. I was brought up a Presbyterian, but early learned that my elders could give me no rational account of their position over others, who, equally with themselves, undertook to form their religion out of the Bible. I was so utterly disheartened, that I had reached the conclusion, very reluctantly indeed, that if God wanted me to know what I must know and do to please Him, He has taken great pains to make the discovery impossible. The principle of authority, I had heard flouted from earliest childhood, and it was only when I grew to see that it was that or nothing, that I looked about me to find if there was in the world anywhere an authority that was of divine origin. The result was inevitable for a mind both logical and religious.

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CHILDHOOD.

Our old home in the city stood upon a street corner, opposite a Gothic church built of rough gray stone. Every morning this church was thronged, and on Sundays it seemed to me that services would never end there. This amazed me; for we children were taken to a church on Sunday only — a day which was called "Sabbath" among my people — and when the eleven o'clock sermon was ended, and the "Sabbath-school," which followed it, was over, we returned home, and remained there, being too young to be taken out to the evening sermon or lecture.

Many a time did I listen to the music that was wafted from the beautiful church over the way. It was music unlike any that I had ever heard — music that soothed and comforted me, yet at the same time filled me with an indefinable yearning. At evening, when the light streamed through the richly-tinted windows; when beyond the doors that swung to and fro I caught glimpses of clustering tapers, twinkling like dim stars through

clouds of vapor; when I heard thrilling voices soaring in ecstasy above the solemn swell of the organ, — it seemed to me that heaven must be in there. Once, and once only, did I enter this chapel — my little heaven on earth. I went thither with our maid. I had begged her to take me; and, without leave, we went together. We were early: the lights burned dimly in the gathering twilight. I saw for the first time in my life a picturesque interior: tapering columns, pointed arches, rose-windows, pictures, statues and frescoes. I saw an altar that inspired me with curious awe; a throng of worshipers, who knelt humbly and prayed incessantly, so that the quiet of the chapel was broken by the soft murmur of lisping lips. Some one in a long dark robe came from a hidden chamber and lighted the candles upon the altar. Where had I seen something like this before? I tried to recall a race of beings clad in these garments, and of whose history I had somehow gained a knowledge. Then a priest in cope, attended by a long train of acolytes, approached the altar. And child as I was I felt that the hearts of the worshipers joined the rapturous Alleluia of the choir.

BOYHOOD.

When I was about ten years of age, we children were taken by our mother into a far country whither our father had preceded us. When I was twelve years old it was my lot, and my choice also,

to be sent upon a long sea-voyage, as companion to an older brother, who was an invalid, in search of health.

On leaving home, my mother's last injunction was to read daily some chapters of my Bible, and this I never failed to do. What solemn hours were mine, alone in my cramped stateroom, poring over that wonderful volume, and every day becoming more and more perplexed with its histories and mysteries! I did not then know that the wisest heads have disputed over it; that while it is the fountain of all love, it has likewise watered the seeds of all dissension. It is reasonable to suppose that the most vigorous exercise of my private judgment was not likely to aid me in the interpretation of even the simplest texts. My mental horizon seemed to grow more and more limited as I advanced; I was swallowed up in a solitude as vast as the sea, and seemed to be drifting upon a shoreless waste of waters.

YOUTH.

I was growing into the speculative age; had begun to philosophize after a fashion, and to analyze my own motives and those of others with whom I was brought in contact.

The state of unbelief in which so many whom I have known have complacently settled themselves has always seemed to me the most uncomfortable of all spiritual conditions; indeed, it is a condition

which is totally wanting in spirituality. A firm conviction of some sort was absolutely necessary to my happiness. I felt that I must believe something. However, to tell the whole truth, it did not then seem to me to matter very much what I believed. I began a search after truth, or what I thought to be truth; and my search, at least, was an honest one. I knew God to be the source of all truth. I desired to worship Him; and, as He was worshiped after one fashion or another in the many and various churches of the city, I wandered from house to house like a weary spirit, seeking that absolute rest which I had never known.

I was constantly laboring under the conviction that if my heart was not touched it was because of the hardness of the heart; and that the fault, of whatever nature it might be, was mine alone.

And thus time passed without any spiritual benefit to my soul until I resolved never again to enter a Protestant church; never again to seek to reconcile her multifarious denominational differences; never again to imperil the little peace of mind I had by profitless speculation.

MANHOOD.

There was to be a high festival in the church of which my German music master was director. A very famous composition was to be produced, with an efficient chorus and full orchestral accompaniment; and my master urged me to be present on

that occasion, promising me a seat by his side near the organ. I met him at the door of the cathedral; it was with difficulty that we made our way to the organ-loft, so dense was the throng that had long since filled the pews, galleries, and aisles, and so great the crowd in the vestibule and upon the steps and pavement before the cathedral doors. From my position by the organist, above the heads of the singers and instrumentalists, I looked into the mystic nave, and saw the high altar with its constellations of twinkling tapers, and the soft glow of the lesser lights upon the altars in the transepts. I saw the glorious paintings, the exquisite statues, and the admirable architectural surroundings.

At last I beheld a congregation that shared a single sentiment; the whole body seemed swayed by one emotion, yet each member of that vast body was individually absorbed in a private devotion. Where else had I seen such an impressive spectacle, where else such reverent decorum? Where else could I have seen it? I was deeply moved; and when my master touched the keys of his instrument, and a prelude as delicate and as full of inspiration as the song of the soaring lark was breathed among the stately pipe columns that towered almost like a forest above our heads; when the long procession of acolytes entered and, bowing before the tabernacle, ranged themselves within the altar-railing; when the deacons and priests followed, preceding the bishop in his rich robes; when

the solemn ceremonial was in progress, and the incense-clouded air trembled with the gush of melody that seemed to permeate the very stones of the edifice and to sway that mass of humanity as the tide is swayed slowly to and fro; when every heart seemed to respond to a single pulse — a pulse throbbing in one great heart that was burning with the love of God: when I began to realize this I held my breath and prayed that the ecstasy of that hour might never end. It was a mighty mystery that struck me dumb with awe!

Of the inclinations, salutations and genuflections; of the vesting and unvesting; the cope and mitre, the cruets, incense-boats and censers; of the candles, torches, missals; the ablutions and chiming bells; of the deep, ominous silence that fell upon us at intervals; the elevations, the thrice solemn administration of the Sacrament, and the sublime Benediction, I knew nothing, and less than nothing; for I doubtless misinterpreted very much of all that I saw and heard. But to see and hear was enough, and more than enough; my hungering and thirsting soul was fed with spiritual manna; it could no longer content itself with husks.

My master, who had been absorbed in his professional duties, turned to me when he at last lifted his hands from the organ. The great building was nearly empty; a few worshipers still knelt in the body of the church, or were grouped before the several altars; two sanctuary boys were carefully

and deliberately extinguishing the tapers upon the altar; a priest was kneeling within the railing, and everywhere still floated the faint, blue filmy clouds that sweetened the air, so that it seemed to have blown softly from the gardens of paradise! — and my master turned to me! I could not speak; I felt that my cheeks were colorless; and, as we walked away from the cathedral door, and were parting at the street corner, he said to me: "Well! will you come again?"

I had reared in my heart an ideal temple, a dream sanctuary and now with its crude and feeble symbolism, it had crumbled into ruins and utterly vanished before this august reality. This was reality indeed; and it was a reality of whose majesty I was fully conscious, though as yet I knew absolutely nothing of its marvellously beautiful significance. Would I come again? I nodded my head in token of assent; yet at that moment something within me seemed to struggle against it and to raise a question of doubt. Is there anything in the wide world more tenacious of life than an inherited prejudice?

I was groping in the dark when a little light threw a ray across my path, suddenly, unexpectedly, as if a star had fallen. One day, on the mantelpiece in our dining-room — shall I ever forget that mantel, or the corner of it on which the wee book in its brown paper cover was lying! — I found a copy of "The Poor Man's Catechism." I had

never before seen a Catholic catechism, nor any Catholic book whatever; but we had stores of anti-Catholic works, and the discovery of this little spy in the camp somewhat startled me. I at once took it away to my chamber and began to read it.

I was on my guard when I turned the first pages of that homely little pamphlet; it was a poor and ragged thing, by no means calculated to prepossess any one in its favor. I was even inclined to be antagonistic when I began to read; but the simplicity and truth that shone from every page disarmed me; the plain, direct questions and the plain, direct answers were just such as I had been longing to ask and to receive. Here they were in my own hands, to be asked as often as I chose, and answered immediately and always. I became profoundly interested; I could not lay down the little oracle till I had gone through it two or three times over. I read it first with curious interest; and afterward reread it, to make sure that I had read it aright; then read again, to clear some obscure point or to get the full meaning of certain passages. What a reading was that when, finally, I read it slowly and earnestly, asking myself after each separate answer, "Can you believe this?" "*Do* you believe it?" After each and all of those answers I answered, triumphantly, "I can and I do!"

I resolved to become a Catholic at once; but how was I to begin? That was a question that I asked myself every hour in the day. Often I knelt in the

church during day or evening, hoping some one would discover my anxiety by a sign and come to my relief. Often I went to the very door of the priests' house, and hung about there, not daring to knock, but trusting that I should ultimately attract the attention of the priests, and be met at least half way. I was always talking of the Church, stupidly and ignorantly, no doubt, but with honest enthusiasm; frequently I was ridiculed for my pains; and thus the time passed, and I was no nearer the longed-for goal than at the hour when I first opened the little brown pamphlet that helped me take the first step toward Truth.

That Catechism I kept, and I have it still; I had a right to keep it, for none of us was ever able to ascertain when or how it came into the house. No owner was found for it, and no one knew who placed it upon the mantel. When it came into my possession I was the only one who had seen it or had knowledge of it.

In time a friend introduced me to the Jesuit Fathers at St. Ignatius College.

It was Father A—, of the Society of Jesus, who made my perplexing studies a delight. It was to him I confided the last vestige of the inborn prejudice which so tenaciously clung to me. It was he who said to me "Read what you will, so long as you read earnestly and honestly the books I give you."

And I read. The history, the philosophy, the

poetry of the Church was gradually laid open to me. I felt as if I were entering a new world — a world full of mysterious beauty and fascination. I felt that I could never learn enough of this marvellous Church — never begin to know as much of it as I should know; but what perplexed me more than all was the false knowledge which I had to unlearn, the cruel misstatements which had to be corrected, and the latent, inborn prejudices which I must needs root out and trample underfoot.

I believe any reasonable man can not read in connection a Catholic and an anti-Catholic work without discovering the logical truth of the one and the false pretences of the other. Childish and stupid seem to me the arguments of the Protestants; empty, vulgar and worthless the tirades of infidels and fanatical writers. I would not recommend any Catholic to read aught of those; they are vanity and vexation of spirit; they are full of subtle poison, that robs the heart of rest, of health, of hope — of everything. A single page of plausible falsehood may pervert an unprejudiced mind so that a whole volume of truth will hardly restore it; therefore leave them alone.

I diligently prosecuted my studies with Father A——, and had begun to see my way clearly, to walk firmly in the path he led me, and to cling steadfastly to the hope of being received into the Church. The day came when this was accomplished, and I became a Catholic in deed and in truth.

Again and again, and yet again, I have been curiously questioned by those who could not follow in the path which led me away from my kinsmen and my comrades, and to whom the mysterious influences which I found irresistible were unknown, or with whom they were of no avail.

What my lips dared scarcely utter — for the decorous recital of an experience so precious to me demanded fit audience and a seasonable hour — my pen in the serene solitude of my chamber *has now related unreservedly.*

O blessed task accomplished! I have set my lamp, though feeble be its flame, where perchance it may light the feet of some bewildered pilgrim. I have cast my bread upon the waters, hopefully awaiting the return — after many days.

THE VERY REV. JAMES KENT, STONE, A.M., LL.D., D.D.

In religion the Very Rev. Father Fidelis, Provincial of the Eastern Province of the Congregation of the Passionists; son of the late Rev. Dr. John S. Stone, President of Cambridge Theological Seminary, and grandson of Chancellor Kent, author of Kent's "Commentaries"; graduate of Harvard, and student at Göttingen until the outbreak of the Civil War, when he returned home and enlisted as a private in the Second Mass. Regiment; became an Episcopal Clergyman, and was in succession President of Kenyon and Hobart Colleges; late Provincial of the Passionists in South America; Appleton Preacher at Harvard, 1891; author of "The Invitation Heeded," from which this account is drawn.

May God pardon my hasty pride, but I used to fancy myself quite free from prejudice, and boasted in my heart of a readiness to welcome truth wherever found, and to follow it in whatever hard path it might lead. I remember long ago copying a golden sentence from one who has done me more service than all other Anglican teachers combined — my beloved Richard Hooker — and how, in a figure, I hung the words as a memorial before my eyes: "If truth do anywhere manifest itself, seek not to smother it with glossing delusions; acknowledge the greatness thereof; and think it your best victory when the same doth prevail over you." If I may confess a thing so sacred, the prayers

which for years were oftenest on my lips were the beautiful Collects, which I had learned through the English Prayer-Book, petitions for the light of the Holy Spirit, that I might have a right judgment in all things; and that I might not only know what things I ought to do, but also have power faithfully to fulfil the same. The prayers were, indeed, graciously answered; but not according to the imperfect intention of him who uttered them.

When the Letter Apostolic of Pope Pius the Ninth, "To all Protestants and other Non-Catholics," first came under my notice, I read it with interest, but, incredible though it now seems, with little other emotion than one of rather contemptuous pity for the august writer. I supposed that I had mastered the Roman question, which I always thought the greatest of all questions in theology or history; and imagined myself familiar with the strong ground upon which every true Catholic ought to stand. For I looked upon myself as a genuine Catholic — an Israelite indeed. I do not mean that I ever had any sympathy with the Ritualistic movement. I never could regard the leaders of that movement with any other feeling than one, I fear, of impatience. I considered them, I regret to say, the most illogical of all thinkers. If the Ritualists were right, the Reformers were wrong. The great sin of schism could never have been justified by any such paltry differences as separate our "advanced" friends from the Roman Communion.

The only consistent course for men to take who believed in the Sacrifice of the Altar and in the Invocation of Saints was to go back, promptly and penitently, to the ancient Church which had proved its infallibility by being in the right after all.

No; I defended the Anglican Reformation with all my soul. I did so upon what I called high ground, in company with such sturdy Catholics (so I termed them) as Andrewes, and Bull, and Hammond. I threw myself back upon "the primitive Church," and upheld the doctrinal standards of the Anglican Communion as faithfully reproducing the uncorrupted model. I loved this reformed Church, supposing her to be indeed Apostolic, both in succession and in creed; and, not knowing an older and a better, I gave her all my devotion (my eyes being blinded), as the mother and mistress of my soul; and I hoped to die, as Bishop Ken declared that he died, "in the Holy, Catholic, and Apostolical Faith, professed by the whole Church before the disunion of East and West — more particularly in the communion of the Church of England, as it stands distinguished from all Papal and Puritan innovation, and as it adheres to the doctrine of the Cross."

The *Responsio Anglicana* of Bishop Wordsworth did not satisfy me. The writer, I thought, wasted his strength on minor points. It was not such an answer as I conceived Bishop Bull would have given; who, by one short move, would have carried

the war into Africa, and would have put the Bishop of Rome immediately on the defensive, by denouncing *him* as the innovator, the wanderer, the schismatic, and by calling upon *him* to return to that Catholic Unity which the arrogance of his predecessors had first broken.

Well, time went on; and I was not conscious of the smallest change in my theological opinions and sympathies; when all at once the ground upon which I had stood, with such careless confidence, gave way. Like a treacherous island, it sank without warning from beneath my feet, and left me struggling in the side waters. Thanks be to God that I was not left to perish in that cold and bitter flood, and that my feet so soon rested for ever on the Eternal Rock! How it came about — by what intellectual process my position had been undermined — by what unconscious steps my feet had been led to an unseen brink, I did not know. I was only aware of the sudden terror with which I found myself slipping and going, and the darkness which succeeded the swift plunge.

So far as I can recall the order of impressions, the first intimation which I received of my insecurity was the return to my mind, of some of the words of the Holy Father; they would not be dismissed; they haunted me uncomfortably: *"Domini Nostri Jesu Christi, qui pro iniversi humani generis salute tradidit animam suam, caritate excitati et compulsi;" "id agimus, ut omni studio et caritate*

cos vel maxime moneamus, exhortemur, et obsecremus, ut serio considerare et animadvertere velint, num ipsi viam ab eodem Christo Domino præscriptam sectentur, quæ ad æternam perducit salutem." There was something in the tone of this appeal which compelled me to listen. The image of the apostolic Pleader came up before me; I saw the beautiful, benignant face again, which I saw as a boy in Rome; I beheld the outstretched hand, extended then in blessing, now in gracious invitation and entreaty: "*Errantium filiorum ad Catholicæ Ecclesiæ reversionem expansis manibus ardentissime expectamus, ut eos in cœlestis Patris domum amantissime excipere, et inexhaustis ejus thesauris ditare possimus.*"

At the same time (strange that passages from such remote sources should appear in conjunction) a detached sentence from that extraordinary book, *Ecce Homo*, came floating into consciousness on some breeze of memory, and caught, and would not be brushed away: "Habit dulls the senses and puts the critical faculty to sleep." It suggested to me — whether legitimately or not, I am not sure; for I do not remember the context — the possibility that my familiarity with my position was no real assurance of its impregnability, and further, that the very frequency with which I had gone over its defenses had rendered me incapable of detecting the weak points. There was a quick misgiving; I feared blankly that there were realities which others

were able to see clearly, but from which my eyes were holden; that there might be some deep undertone of truth which I had never been able to catch, like the cosmic harmony of the ancients, which to gross mortal ears, alive to lesser but sharper sounds, was inaudible. I found myself reflecting upon the immeasurable influence of education, and how incalculable must be the power over a mind of opinions imbibed from infancy through every pore and never counteracted. If these opinions were prejudices, how almost impossible would it be for truth to penetrate them! I thought of the English language, in which I had learned to think and to express my thoughts; and I remembered how for three hundred years that tongue had been one vast ceaseless attack upon the Roman Catholic Church; how its literature was saturated with a spirit of the most deadly antagonism to that Church, not in the department of theology only, but of history, and poetry, and travels and fiction, aye! and the very primers in the hands of the little children. If such a fountain should prove to be poisoned, what effect might not be anticipated in those who all their lives had drunk of its streams! All this passed through my mind more rapidly than I have been able to record it; and I felt my heart growing faint at a whisper — to which nevertheless I listened intently — that perhaps I had prejudged the case after all.

The effect of this impression was soon after indefinitely increased by a passage of Moëhler, which

forcibly arrested my attention. Speaking of the delusions of the early heretics, the learned writer says: "There are certainly few who have studied the Gnostic errors, that are not seized with the deepest astonishment, how their partisans could possibly deem their whimsical opinions, the fantastic forms of their demonology, and the rest, to be Christian Apostolic doctrines; and many a man among us perhaps believes, that he could in a single hour confute thousands of them by the Bible, and bring them back to pure Christianity; so much so indeed, that he is even disposed to accuse their then opponents of a want of dexterity, because they did not succeed. But, when once a peculiar system of moral life hath been called into existence, should it even be composed of the most corrupt elements, no ordinary force of external proofs, no conclusions of ratiocination, no eloquence, are able to destroy it; its roots lie mostly too deep to be pervious to mortal eye: it can only perish of itself, become gradually exhausted, spend its rage, and disappear. But, as long as it flourishes, all around is converted into a demonstration in its favor: earth speaks for it, and the heavens are its warranty. Meanwhile, a new age, with another spirit and other elements of life, springs up: this, without any points of internal contact with the past, is often at a loss to comprehend it, and demands with astonishment how its existence had been possible. But, should Divine Grace, which can alone kindle the opposite true life,

succeed in delivering one individual from such errors, then he expresses the incomprehensible and inconceivable nature of his former state, by saying that he had been, as it were, enchanted, and that something, like scales, had fallen from his eyes."

I remember how St. Augustine, "one of the profoundest thinkers of antiquity," even for four years after he had become a catechuman under St. Ambrose, was entangled in the meshes of the Manichæan heresy. I admitted instantly that I, too, might be under a spell; that my case might be — I do not dare to say like that of the great Saint and Father, but that of the Donatists or the Gnostics; since I was certainly not more positive in my convictions than they, neither could I furnish myself with any satisfactory reason for believing that I was blessed with greater light. And then the Hand of God drew back the veil of my heart; and I saw for the first time, and all at once, how utterly steeped I had been in prejudice, how from the beginning I had, without a question or suspicion, assumed the very point about which I ought reverently to have enquired with an impartial and docile mind. I had studied the Roman controversy; so I thought — if in my short life I could fairly be said to have studied anything; but how had I studied it? Had there ever been a time when it was an open question in my mind whether the claims of the Roman Church were valid? Had I begun by admitting that the Pope might be right?

Had it ever crossed my thoughts that the Church in communion with the See of Peter might be indeed the one only Catholic Church of our Lord Jesus Christ? And had I ever resolved, with all my soul, as one standing on the threshold and in the awful light of eternity, to begin by tearing down every assumption and divesting myself of every prejudice, and then, wherever truth should lead the way, to follow — "leave all and follow"? Alas! never. I had studied simply to combat and refute. The suggestion that "Romanism" might after all be identical with Christianity was preposterous. The Papacy was the great Apostacy, the mystery of iniquity; it was the masterpiece of Satan, who had made his most successful attack upon the Church of God by entering and corrupting it. The rise of the Papal pretensions was matter of the plainest history; and every well-instructed child could point out how one fiction after another had been grafted into the creed of that apostate Church, until now the simple faith of early days was scarce recognizable under the accumulated error of centuries. "History"— who wrote that history? "Well-instructed child"— why, that was the very point at issue!

Of course I had not yet begun to examine and appreciate the Catholic argument (I may as well use the word at once as synonymous with Roman Catholic); I merely saw that there had been an appeal, and that the case which I had supposed settled

had been carried into a higher court. The decision of the past had not been reversed; but it might be reversed. I discovered that I had been laboriously building without thoroughly inspecting my foundation, and that I would have to do my work all over again. I saw that I had committed "the very illogical mistake" against which I had often warned young men under my instruction, the error of those who first canvas "all the objections against any particular system whose pretensions to truth they would examine, before they consider the direct arguments in its favor." I saw that I had been guilty of what Bossuet calls "a calumny," and what I now acknowledged to be an act of injustice, namely, of charging upon Catholics inferences which I had myself drawn from their doctrines, but against which Catholics indignantly protest. I could not say with St. Augustine that "I blushed with joy," but with shame I blushed, "at having so many years barked not against the Catholic faith, but against the fictions of carnal imaginations. For so rash and impious had I been, that what I ought by enquiring to have learned, I had pronounced on, condemning. . . . I should have knocked and proposed the doubt, how it was to be believed, not insultingly opposed it as if believed."

This is the "plunge" I spoke of. I used the word because it expressed, as well perhaps as any other, the terrifying rapidity which marked the steps of my intellectual crisis. Upon some men the dis-

covery of a life-long error may break gradually; truth may be said to have its dawning; but to me it came with a shock. The rain descended and the floods came; my house fell; and great was the fall of it.

Then followed a sense of blank desolateness. I was groping among ruins; and wherewith should I go to work to build again? I do not mean that I faltered. Thank God that He kept me true, and suffered me not to shrink from the sharp agony which I perceived was possibly in store for me. To borrow words of the great Father from whose experience I have already drawn, "God gave me that mind, that I should prefer nothing to the discovery of truth, wish, think of, love naught besides." But the task of reconstruction seemed almost hopeless.

I began by taking note of, and ruling out, all considerations which could conceivably stand in the way of an impartial investigation. I challenged the witnesses. On the one hand, I put aside such as these: cherished opinions; hallowed associations; the intellectual and social accumulations of my life thus far; a useful and honorable position; fair hopes, and plans long pondered; the grief of hearts more dear than hopes, or plans, or life itself. On the other side, I had to be on my guard against — what? Aye, what! Ah, dear souls! who can talk so bravely about the fascinations of Romanism and the duty of resisting its seductive charms, what do

you know of the anguish of a heart that is called to give up all for truth, and is ready, if need be, to make the sacrifice? No; on the side of the Church of Rome there was absolutely nothing — unless, indeed, it might be some attraction lurking in the very completeness of the immolation. Well, there might be something in this; so I marked it down as a danger to be carefully watched against.

And so I set my face forward with desperate earnestness; and in due time — it may seem, a very short time — I had not a trace of doubt left that I had all along been a vain enemy of the One, Catholic, and Apostolic Church. Why not in a short time? Why not in a month, or a week, or a day? Is it any reflection upon Truth that she surrenders herself quickly to a soul whose every nerve is strained in her pursuit? Is it any argument against the Church of God that it is easily identified? Surely, if there be a Kingdom of Heaven upon earth, it must be known by marks which cannot be mistaken. Yes! I knew it when I had found it. And I found it as in the parable, like a treasure hidden in a field — in the self-same field up and down which I had wandered for years, and where I had often trampled it under my feet. And when I had found it, I hid it, scarce daring to gaze at its splendor, and crying, as St. Augustine cried, "Too late, alas! have I known thee, O ancient and eternal Truth!" And then, for joy thereof, I went and sold all that I had, and bought that field.

MARIA LONGWORTH STORER,

CINCINNATI, OHIO.

Wife of the Hon. Bellamy Storer, late Ambassador to Austro-Hungary.

My parents, Mr. Joseph Longworth (my father), and my mother (who was a daughter of Dr. Landon Cabell Rives, of Virginia) were both communicants of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Cincinnati, to which town my grandfather, Nicholas Longworth, had come in the year 1805.

I was brought up and confirmed in the Episcopal Church, and we belonged to the "High Church" school. I retained always the faith of that Church, but as I grew older, the service did not satisfy me. I thought that I could read and pray better at home, and attendance on Sunday to hear the service and sermon seemed entirely unnecessary. It seemed to me something like going simply to a lecture-room which was interesting or dull according to the preacher.

I liked the Religious Orders of the Catholic Church and gave habitually to Catholic charities because I knew that the money would go directly to the poor.

I began to think seriously of the Catholic faith and religion only after a summer spent in Brittany,

where the chaplain of a convent where we were staying, preached a sermon on the Holy Eucharist. I had never understood that Sacrament before.

The next year, October, 1891, we went to live in Washington, my husband having been elected to Congress. The day after our arrival, I drove out to the Catholic University to hear Bishop Keane lecture upon the Encyclical of Pope Leo on Labor. I was so impressed that I got all the Encyclicals of the late Pope and read them with deep interest. A few weeks later, Mr. Storer and I went to High Mass at St. Augustine's Church, simply to hear the music. A prelate, who was a stranger to us, preached a sermon on the dignity of labor and the duties of Catholics, which we considered the best sermon we had ever listened to. On inquiring the name of the preacher, we were told that he was Archbishop Ireland of St. Paul.

In Advent of the same year, I went to hear Bishop Keane preach a series of sermons. On Christmas day, I suddenly decided to write to the Bishop and ask for some Catholic books. He very kindly sent me some, which I studied with much profit to myself. On June 26, 1892, I received conditional baptism, and Confirmation from Bishop Keane at the Catholic University.

My daughter, Miss Margaret Rives Nichols had attended a history class during the winter taught by Father Daugherty, S.J., Vice-Rector of Georgetown University. She was received into the

Church at Georgetown in April, 1892, two months before my reception. She married three years later the Marquis de Chambrun, a great-great-grandson of Lafayette. They live in France.

Mr. Storer was interested in the Church after my conversion. We hired a house at Westport on Lake Champlain for the summer of 1896. There we saw nearly every day the priest of the parish, Father F. X. Lachance, one of the most devoted servants of the Lord whom I have ever known; who drove eighteen miles and back, fasting every Sunday, in order to serve the Church at Elizabethtown as well as Westport. All the non-Catholics of Westport were devoted to Father Lachance, for he had changed a rather lawless population into respectable and law-abiding citizens.

I think the sight of such a life, and acquaintance with this priest, gave Mr. Storer the final human impulse: for Father Lachance gave him conditional baptism at the little Westport church before we left, in September, 1896. Mr. Storer was confirmed by Archbishop Elder in October of the same year.

MISS SUSIE T. SWIFT.

Graduate of Vassar; late Brigadier of the Salvation Army, head of the Auxiliary League of America, and editor of "All the World." She was a pioneer in the work among the waifs of London, establishing the Newsboys' Home in Fleet Street. She is known in religion as Sister M. Imelda Teresa, O. P., of the Congregation of St. Catherine di Ricci, Directress of the Dominican College of Our Lady Help of Christians, Havana, Cuba.

"How can I write the story of my conversion?" I asked of Fr. Pardow, S.J., a few months after my baptism. "I'm beginning to think I don't know it myself. I hear one priest tell it, and all he says it true, and I read an item in a Catholic paper which is quite true, too, but tells something entirely different. Frs. Van Rensselaer and Doyle and Searle all had a hand in it, and each of them sees it in an entirely different light from the others, while your Fr. Browne says that I don't put enough stress on the part the medal of the Immaculate Conceptio played in it. I never even thought of the medal having to do with it."

Father Pardow smiled tranquilly. "It is all a matter of point of view," he said. "You are too near the event to describe it. In a few years, as you climb further up the hill, you will look down and you will write an account altogether different

from the one you give now. All the same, write this one, and don't mind, if people call you inconsistent, later. Each account will appeal to those who stand on the spot from which each is written."

And truly, looking back to-day, the events of my crowded years in the Salvation Army, which occupied so large a space in the vision of the Catholic public which rejoiced and the Protestant public which lamented my conversion seem to me to hold fewer milestones on my "Road to Rome" than certain moments in my life as girl and student, before I wore the blue and silver which, indeed, passed me in safety through many a danger-spot in London or Chicago slums, but which meant little soul activity. Nor have I to tell how I grew out of Protestantism so much as how I grew into Catholicism.

In childhood, there was at first, no sense of discord between the God before Whom one knelt, bolt upright, while reciting memory prayers to mamma or auntie, who corrected emphasis and elocution, and the Jesus to Whom, later on, cuddled close to the wall, one told all the happenings of the day. But there came an hour, one winter night, in a lonely room, when, looking out at gray mountains overarched by a gray sky which spread over miles of unbroken snow I felt what it was to stand alone with God in His universe, and realized the Majesty of the Father. Life seemed to space itself out before me. How petty seemed my anthropomorphic

conceptions of a God! I felt that I had discovered traces of a new religion, which was worth hunting for all one's life. Beyond those mountains lay, all unknown to me, the Eucharistic God of Whom I had never even heard in my ten years of life. But He waked in my heart that night the hunger which was never satisfied till the hour of my First Communion — the hunger which was to make me bold enough to cut loose, bit by bit, from all convention and all tradition.

For some years, the manifestations of this newborn hunger were hardly gratifying to my relatives.

"How do you know the Bible is true?" I asked. "Anybody could write a book and say it was all true. You don't KNOW. And if the Bible isn't true, none of it is true, and there isn't any Heaven, perhaps, or any God at all, and if there isn't, I don't want to live myself."

My family fell back on authority.

"Papa believes the Bible. Can't his little girl believe what he believes?"

NO. But she could keep silent and hide her suffering, that he might not suffer. And she did.

I read and re-read all the mildly pious literature I could find in a not over devout but fairly "orthodox" family, and I attended the Methodist, Presbyterian and Episcopal Churches by turns, till I went to boarding school, and added the pleasing varieties of the Universalist and Congregationalist. I read Barnes' Sermons for the Young, bits of Clarke's

Commentaries, Moody's Sermons, even snatches of Butler and Hooker, struggling to find out how souls came into personal and permanent relationship with God. I discovered that I had never been baptized, and asked for the sacrament, only to be told that my mother had suffered so much from having been baptized in one church in infancy and wishing to unite with another when she grew up, that she had decided never to fetter me. Baptism meant only that you decided to join a certain church. I must wait for it till my "teens," at least.

I struggled at fourteen, through a "conversion" under the guidance of George A. Halls.

"Just give yourself to God, as you would give me that glove, if I asked for it," he said, picking up the bit of lavender kid.

"That is different," I objected. "I could get another glove to-morrow. But if I give myself to God to-night, I may want to take myself back to-morrow. Beside, what difference would it make?"

"Oh, no" — serenely — "you won't want to take yourself back. He will keep you. The difference? All the difference. He will take care of His own."

I knew four volumes of Methodist catechism by heart and had studied the Berean course for five years. But I was left to the mercy of any chance evangelist for all the experimental part of religion — for all that is taught to a Catholic child before its

first Communion, and in which a fair number are tutored at least up to mature life through the direction of the confessional! My emancipation from that kind of teaching came through a sentence in one of Moody's sermons. Mr. Moody represented to me, as to many wiser people than I, thirty years ago, orthodox Christianity at its best. Here, as in most of my mental revolts against the religion of my childhood, I was wholly Catholic in instinct, though destitute of any dogmatic basis for my intuition.

"Oh, what will a lost soul do in the swellings of Jordan?" queried Mr. Moody, and his reply left no loophole for a deathbed conversion.

"Even there," I wrote in my diary, "It may turn to the Love which can never fail. It may look to the Jesus who died."

Moody and what he represented went by the board. Miracles followed. On the way home from a boarding school expedition after chestnuts, I walked close to my favorite teacher and said, "Miss——, do you believe that Lazarus was very dead?"

"Why? Don't you?" she answered.

"No," came the answer, with an effort which shook my whole frame. "I don't. I think he was in a trance."

She paused. "But do you realize?" she asked, slowly, "that Jesus certainly either believed he was dead or intended that people should think so?

That if Lazarus was not 'very dead,' Jesus was either a mere man, capable of making mistakes, or an impostor? Are you prepared to accept all the consequences of your disbelief in that miracle?"

"I have thought of all," I answered, "and I am prepared for all." "Then," she said, "I have no reply to make to you. My relation to your parents, who DO believe it, and who trust you to me, give me no right to make one. I am sorry for you, with all my heart. You have before you a path of great suffering. I can only say that you will have my love and my sympathy, and that I will help you in all ways in which I honorably can."

Years after, I sought her out and told her that I was to be baptized a Catholic. "What have you to say to me now?" I asked.

"I have to say," she answered, "that the Roman Catholic Church is undoubtedly the one founded by Jesus of Nazareth. Therefore, if Jesus is God, that is the true and only Church of God. All logic and all history show that. What has astonished me has been that you, with your logical mind, could believe that He was God and yet not be a Catholic. That has puzzled me ever since you were twenty-one."

Slowly, the logic of life forced me to believe in God. Suffering and grief made me cry out to Him, and He answered. Bit by bit, before I graduated from Vassar, which I entered as an "agnostic," I had decided that I "believed more than I disbe-

lieved" in Christianity, and had been baptized and presented for confirmation by the rector of Christ Episcopal Church, Poughkeepsie, carefully explaining that my action was purely a scientific experiment, and that I was following out the method taught me in chemistry by applying the series of reagents in use in Episcopalian Christianity — baptism, confirmation and Holy Communion. At this time and for many years after, it was with me as with Fr. Darlington, S.J.

"An á priori argument had little weight for a mind which had not been trained in metaphysics. Experience was my guide, and to experience alone could I trust." ("City of Peace" P. 71.)

Of psychology and ethics, next to nothing was taught at Vassar in those days. The inadequacy of the courses (?) in history was remarkable. It was hardly my fault that I went out into life excellently drilled in logic, but compelled to work, in all matters of conduct and religion, on premises like the closet naturalist's camel —"Evolved from my inner consciousness."

Only two books out of the immense number read during my four college years had any direct influence on my Romeward course — a life of St. Ignatius, by the Anglican Isaac Williams, which gave me an ideal of all-consuming activity in God's interests such as satisfied my restless, passionate nature, and Newman's "Grammar of Assent."

"If you say 'Yes' to the first page," said the

tutor who recommended it, "you must say 'yes' right through the book, and then you will be a Catholic. So say 'No' at the first page, and all the way through."

This seems to me the spirit in which I read many a Catholic book, in the following years!

My attitude toward the Church at this time was that it was a beautiful impossibility, so completely intellectually impracticable that there was no slightest danger in studying its lovely, outworn myths. My first respect for it came through an experience which I have seldom mentioned even to my intimate friends.

That first sacrament — Baptism — "worked" in me in a virulent kind of way which might justify the tendency I have always found in the untutored mind to confuse it with vaccination. Its result had been a sense of sin which I regarded as a proof of its utter inefficiency. Day and night, through my gay senior year at College, I was burdened with a sense of guilt; with a conviction, as I put it afterward, that "all my bright, innocent girl-life was black with sins of selfishness and worldliness, if with no worse."

It was in this state of mind that I went out to teach in a fashionable boarding school. I was very far from being an oppressed, Jane Eyre kind of person, and despite my lady-principal's remonstrances, insisted in driving myself about the country-side of an afternoon. As she predicted, I

came to grief with a spirited horse. Great was my disappointment, when I opened my eyes after the flight through the air which I had believed meant instant death.

"Do you think you are fit to die?" asked a horrified Methodist fellow teacher.

"No," I answered. "But I think I am far less fit to live, and I am more afraid of living than of dying."

My family insisted on my breaking my contract and going to Europe to recuperate. Conscience told me that I was quite able to finish the school year. While the matter was under discussion, I stopped in one day to look at St. Patrick's Cathedral, then quite new. An inspiration seized me. Catholic priests were always settling questions of conscience. Why not ask one whether my duty, in the present case, was to family or employer? The sacristan told me to go to a certain number on Madison Avenue, and ask for Fr. McD.——whom, I afterward learned was then secretary to Archbishop Corrigan. In he came — strait soutane, clean-shaven, ascetic face, "cut out of ice," I said, and bringing with him an atmosphere as bracing as that of the North Pole. He had little to say to what seemed to me the point at issue. But he leaped at once at the fact that my religious system gave me no basis from which to settle my ethical perplexities. Before I left, he had compelled my respect for whatever system had produced himself, had

rooted deep in my mind the convictions that sin was something more than error or ignorance, that the creature who admitted the existence of a Creator tacitly admitted duties toward Him, and that the doctrine of the Trinity was not necessarily unreasonable, because it transcended reason. I have often wondered if the young priest did not think he wasted two hours that day. But in point of fact, though he has never known it, the morning's work of the present Bishop of B—— was very fair in amount, while as to durability, it has lasted twenty-two years and has never needed redoing. It will, I think, endure, "till face to face strikes doubting dumb." Eighteen years after, I put the "Faith of our Fathers," which he gave me that day, into the library of the Dominican Convent where I was Mistress of Novices.

My account of the interview, however, settled the European trip. My family whisked me off with little time to buy books for the voyage. But Newman's Poems went with me, and the "Dream of Gerontius" did more for me than the "Grammar of Assent," for it gave a brief, strong creed:

> "Firmly I believe and truly,
> God is Three and God is One;
> And I next acknowledge duly,
> Manhood taken by the Son.
> And I trust and hope most fully
> In that Manhood Crucified,
> And each thought and deed unruly
> Do to death, as He has died.

Simply to His grace and wholly,
Light and life and strength belong,
And I love, supremely, solely,
Him the Holy, Him the strong."

In Scotland, in 1884, I met the Salvation Army. I have told so often, from the pulpit and platform, with voice and pen, what that meeting then meant to me, that I do not think I need repeat it here. To those who find it hard to understand how an Episcopalian of "High" tastes could work with the Army, I answer that the Army taught in those days that it was "not a church, but a mission," and placed no obstacle in the way of my receiving the sacraments (?) of my own or any other denomination. To those who do not see how an educated person can work with the Salvationists, I simply say that they do not know the Army's leaders, or the freedom of thought and mental activity permitted to those officers who prove that they can make a wise use of liberty. Into the London Headquarters to which my sister and I were attached, are drawn the most intelligent organizers whom the "General" can select from all lands. I used to say, at first, that education must destroy originality, so marvellous were the intellects around me, and so manifestly untrained in ordinary pedagogic ways. Many highly educated men and women surround the leaders — men and women for the most part like my old self — all untaught in history or metaphysics, but clever lin-

guists, fair scientists, brilliant popular writers, arguing backward from the rapid results of Salvationism to causes which are far enough afield, wonderfully skilled in pulling the "Cords of Adam" to advantage. For twelve years I worked with them. No woman living knows the Salvation Army better than I do. If I shudder to-day at remembering much that I saw, and knew, and even aided in, it is not because the Army is worse than other Protestant organizations. I believe it is better. But it is less bound by traditions handed down from Catholic days and, in the main, wholesome; and it is an absolutely consistent form of Protestantism. Its so-called likenesses to the Catholic Church are purely superficial and governmental. Port Royal, at its worst, was never narrower or bitterer than we sweetfaced "Training Home Lassies" who were actually taught to say "Thank God, we are not as other women." God permitted it all, I am sure. I did, in those years, what I honestly believed was His will, and since He brought me out "into a wealthy place," I can never doubt the power of His converting grace to reach those who seem most hedged in by adverse circumstances.

In February, 1897, I wrote my letter of resignation from New York to Mr. Bramwell Booth, of London, who had for years been my spiritual director as well as my superior officer, having taken upon himself the guidance of a character which pre-

sented some difficulties to his father, the "General," but which the "Chief" had never failed to understand or to manipulate with ease until the day when I presented myself before him with much fear and trembling, only to find, with a surprise which had in it almost an element of grief, that he was absolutely powerless against a soul armored in sacramental grace. Father Doyle, C.S.P. has told me since, that till he read that letter at my request, "to see if I say anything heretical," he had no idea "that the fruit was ripe for plucking." I meant to be perfectly frank with him, but I felt so great a horror of the overwrought rhetoric of Salvationism that my words to him on religious matters were always few and apparently cold, for the effort of expressing my new experiences was always torture till I poured them out in the only safe place — behind the dear confessional curtain.

That letter was, indeed, so full a revelation of myself in innermost relations to God that for years the fear of its publication was my nightmare. Now, that old life is, in itself, only the dream from which it seems incredible that I should not have waked sooner, and the letter, stained yet with my hot tears, seems so Protestant in tone that I only use it because its Methodistic phraseology may make it more intelligible to those who stand on the threshold where I lingered for so many years. I give it almost entire, with only a few annotations:

Feb. 23rd, 1897.

My dear Chief:

I do not know how to say what I have to tell you in any way that will not grieve you at first. I have put off saying it to the last possible moment, and I put myself wholly into your hands — saving as yet unforeseen dictations of my conscience — as to the results of my communication up to June first.

God has called me to break my life sharply in two again, as I did when I came to you twelve years ago. It is harder now in one way. A girl of twenty-two can dare much that a woman of thirty-four shrinks from. And I knew, then, that my father would never let me want a home. Now, his life must be a matter of a few years, and I must learn a new way to earn my bread.

With heart and soul and conscience and will, I am a Catholic.

That in itself will tell you that I go to no easier path. Rome has no prizes for women. The Church offers no inducements to converts. But in these years with you, I have learned to love our Lord Jesus Christ supremely, and I would rather die in the Charity Hospital on Blackwell's Island, free to worship my Savior in his own appointed way for me, than to have the wealth of Helen Gould or the opportunities of Frances Willard or of your own mother, and stand in spirit where I did three months ago.

I love the Army. I love you. I suffer far more in leaving you all than I did in giving up friends and home and country to come to you. I have regained most of the old friends and made hundreds of new ones. Now, I must surrender both. I have not a Catholic friend on this side the water whom I ever saw before Dec. 29, and only fragile old Mrs. Drummond on the other (Hon. Mrs. Drummond, mother of Mr. Lister Drummond so well known for his work in the Guild of Our Lady of Ransom for the Conversion of England). But I just fall on the knees of my soul in wonder and praise to the God Whose Presence in the midst of a conflict as sharp as it was short, has been so real, and Whose voice has been so clear that I have not dared to doubt His will, and have never for one hour since January third, thought of drawing back from the *Via Dolorosa* of the convert.

You will remind me of the opportunities for helping souls whicl I am flinging away. No, dearest long-time Leader! I can only help souls — only really serve the world, as you yourself have taught me — by and in obedience to God. . . . I feel it is only right to you and the General and to C. C.— to whom I earnestly ask you to show this letter — to give you an outline map of the road by which I have come, though indeed, I can no more hope that most people will understand my motives than can those souls who enter the Army as I did, urged on by that compelling voice of God's Spirit

Whose note of authority is only comprehended by the one to whom He speaks.

Before I even met the Army, a priest had, as I have told you before, prepared my mind for its teachings by convincing me of sin and by forcing me to acknowledge that the doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation were not incompatible with reason, although not to be apprehended by the intellect. . . . During the summer and winter after every ray of human happiness faded out of my life, my mode of religion failed me, too. Faber's "Spiritual Conferences" and "Growth in Holiness" fell into my hands. They helped — nothing else had — No one did, except C. C., and all his helpful counsels matched with Faber. I told him so, and he warned and argued me out of any personal contact with the Church and managed to keep me so busy in office and corps that I had little time even for books. But prayer led me on, prayer and care for the soul of ——. I used to ask God to accept my soul for his, and to withdraw all grace from me and give him a double portion that he might . . . have an abundant entrance into that Heaven which I felt he was in horrible danger of never entering. I got wonderful comfort from the Catholic doctrine of impetration and from trying to offer up my very sorrow to God as a prayer in act and will for his soul. This I got on the track of through a poem of Adelaide Procter's and later, in 1893, through a sermon in the Church of the

Holy Name, Manchester, where I went on a free Sunday evening, when too tired out for a Salvation Army meeting. That was the only Catholic sermon except one (while on rest) that I heard while I was with you in England. I have only heard four since.

For the last five years, I have, as I think you and all my Army intimates of high rank know, been greatly concerned over what seemed to me the lack of provision for the saint-i-fying and keeping in real self-knowledge of our own people. Confession and Communion, as they were linked and used in High Church parishes like St. Peter's of the Docks, seemed to me to supply a want which our "penitent forms" and "personals" for soldiers and officers only imperfectly met. This thought has been steadily in my mind, though I never dreamed where pondering and prayer would lead me.

But, oh, dear Chief, no reasonings have brought me here. Just God has constantly called me on by sudden illuminations. Reason has followed faith.

At a "Two Days with God" [1] in Dec., 1890, the blackness of darkness settled down on my soul. It lasted for three months, during which, though with a will steadily set to do God's will and not conscious of having grieved Him, I could not realize His Presence for an instant. Search-

[1] A "Two Days With God" is a S. A. Holiness Convention.

ing my soul one night, He seemed to say: "Will you come out from the Army and be a Catholic if I ask it?" "Yes, Lord," I answered. The clouds broke. Peace came. But He said: "Not yet," and I went on, coming to regard the episode as a mere test of obedience in spirit. Later on, about two years ago, the Life of St. Teresa — or her prayers for me — stirred my mind to questions. But dear Mrs. Drummond, who was then a staunch Salvationist, laid my fears and perplexities, and I was horrified when my sister said to the General what I regarded as cruelly false — that I was a Catholic at heart. It hurt me. I thought I held only such Catholic doctrine as lay at the very foundation of Christianity, was brought out in the Salvation Army, and obscured in Protestantism. Honestly, Chief, I have told you my whole heart from time to time, so far as I knew it myself.

When I came to America last spring, I had to go into the depths of our principles — of internationalism, of unity in faith, of surrender of individualism for the sake of membership in a Spirit-guided body. I found these based on the Bible, but these notes pointed out — the Church! I had to learn to know the souls of our officers as never before. I was touched by their good dispositions and intentions, horrified by their shallowness, their spiritual ignorance. I saw the need for *them* of the confessional, even without absolution. In-

deed, Commissioner Eva, Brigadier E. and I did little else than sit in the confessional in the Northwest.

I did not formulate this then. Else I should have told you.

Then my mother died. She died the death of a saint, but my bewildered spirit said always, as I watched her, "She is dying, not like a Salvationist, but like a Catholic saint." I saw the craving of a soul in its last extremity for strong, sacramental help. I recognized her spirit over again when first I heard sung at Benediction:

> "Let me die, my lips repeating,
> Jesus, mercy, Mary, pray."

Mother always prayed for her dear dead. I prayed for her. I spoke to her *in* God, not knowing that I followed Catholic teaching in so doing. I longed once more for Holy Communion that I might realize the Communion of Saints, and in it, even in a Protestant Church, I felt something strangely akin to the Real Presence. But all this only deepened my love for our dearest Lord, Who so evidently ministered to her, and who made the spiritual world so much nearer by her passing. My sister told me afterward that she felt a "strange separation of spirit from me over our mother's deathbed." This almost broke my heart at the time. I understand it now. But the solitude of soul in which I have been set has brought

a nearness to God which has been worth all — all. And when my lips are unsealed from the silence which was at first a silence of bewilderment, and has, in the last weeks been a silence compelled by honor, I think I shall be able to spare my friends the pain of feeling that I am a "backslider" in heart or action.

Then the ministerial controversy concerning the sacraments was forced upon me in New York, and again I studied Barclay's "Apology" and the New Testament, and again I came to my position of 1884 — that the New Testament alone offered no ground for the view of the sacraments which obtains in most Protestant Churches; and that the New Testament interpreted by tradition taught the doctrine of the Catholic Church as to Baptism and Communion. I have never seen a possible *Via Media* in Episcopalianism since I thought on the matter at all. As I said to the General: "There is nothing for me between Salvationism and Catholicism."

Just before this, I had been arguing with an Adventist for the immortality of the soul on the ground of the universal belief of all Christians in all lands, and the impossibility of God letting His whole Church be so deceived, when it swept over me like a flood that this argument made against our non-sacramentarianism, and was really the old Augustinian argument, *"Semper, ubique eadem."*

I felt I must sometimes go to the Lord's Supper

and I did. One Sunday evening, I went out to go to a little mission of Trinity near by. It was closed, and I turned, instead, into the Church of St. Francis Xavier for Benediction. There, for the first time, I felt the possibility of believing that my Lord was present in a different way to that in which His Spirit makes Him present with His people everywhere. He was THERE. Surely, Chief, we know when God is specially present in a meeting, though the crowd does not. I believed because I discerned Him. Transubstantiation is to me parallel with the Incarnation — no whit more difficult to receive. But it came to me just like that first revelation of Jesus — a FACT manifested to my soul. I am not sure whether it was before or after this that Hon. Mrs. Drummond, who had been my sheet anchor of Protestantism, wrote me the grounds of her entrance into the Holy Catholic Apostolic Roman Church. In any case her letter did not specially appeal to me. I felt that the Spirit of God led her, from the tone of her letter, but as her course of action was based on reverence for Holy Scripture which I had never felt in the same way, her line of argument did not strike me. "Who guards, possesses," was the only sentence which fastened itself in my mind. But, remembering my never quite laid doubts, I asked for an interview with the priest she advised me to see, if I had any desire to seek instruction — Father Searle, a convert, a Harvard man, and

professor of astronomy at the Catholic University of Washington. I prayed very much before I saw him, and I read a little five cent book of his. To my great surprise, it told me nothing new — only bore out the workings of my own mind. . . . I saw Father Searle. He confirmed the logic of my train of thought in a cool, mathematical way, but wouldn't give me any more books. Said I was sufficiently well instructed and only needed prayer. My one crux: "Did our Lord intend to establish a visible Church as well as an invisible Kingdom, could only be met by the illumination of grace. I said I had no time to pray, and he showed me patiently how such prayer as I needed could be a constant undercurrent of life, and that God could never have made such all-important knowledge dependent on study.

So I went away and went to work and put all into God's hands, and He did not keep me waiting long. That was on December 26th. By New Year's dawn, I knew. I saw the Church as Christ's creation, just as I saw Him the Incarnation of God. What Church He founded, if any, did not want considering, I settled that, years ago, and resettled it, when I read Manning's biography. The Church of the Apostles could hardly be the one within which Heber Newton is let deny its very existence, and wherein every shade of belief about the Word and His Words is allowed. There was no struggle that night, only a profound peace. The

real agony began next day, when I got doggedly up — I was really prostrated with mental pain — and went down to Rose Hawthorne Lathrop's three little rooms in a tenement house, to look into a Catholic woman's eyes and ask her to pity and pray for me. We knew one another only through newspapers, but she took me in, and carried me off to another priest. Once I had told him that I was convinced, light came, joy, rapture. It has lasted for thirty-one days of a heaven on earth. It may not last like this; but its source will last.

But such rapture can consist with many separate agonies — at thought of you — of my father — of C. C.— of the Consul (Emma Booth-Tucker) and my American comrades — of souls who will not follow me on out of dawn into noonday, but drift back into the darkness whence I had led them — even at thought of myself again friendless, homeless, penniless, professionless and cut off from all public work for Our Lord.

I know no repudiation of past grace, but I shall have no chance to say so — God has led me on. I can never thank you enough for all you have been to me. But if I faltered or shrank, I should deny all you have taught me and drag our principles in the dust and Jesus would hide His face from me. I seek His will — His way. His work can be done with or without me.

Archbishop Corrigan I have found a sufficiently broad-minded Christian gentleman to see the

Army's side as well as his own. He would not sanction any silent Catholicism, but he pondered, and decided that it would not be wrong for me to go on in a work where I was even forbidden to speak against Catholicism until June — the delay I begged for, especially since I needed instruction.

I have tried to think that I might avail myself of this permission to keep silence till June and gather a little strength, physical and spiritual, wherewith to go through the conflict which love will force upon me. But I find from my tours in the Northwest and in Boston that I cannot. My public meetings I can manage; but in hand to hand work with souls I often have to stop short where either your representative or a child of the Church ought to go on. I am largely jotting down this letter in the intervals of officers' councils, and never in my life did I love my comrades better nor did my heart go out more truly with most of our songs.

"I love Him best of all.
He is my dearest Friend.
With His own blood He bought mė,
He'll keep me to the end.
With His strong arm about me,
I care not what befall;
He will not leave nor forsake me —
I love Him best of all."

"For the cross I am ready,
Till I take my crown."

God is with you, dear Chief, I doubt it not. He has been with me. But he would leave me now if I did not accept the consequences of the splendid training I have had under you. At the risk of vexing you, I can but tell you that much of my future life will be spent in prayer that you, to whom God has given great illumination in ascetics, and who have brought out prominently in all your personal work with your officers what I now know to be leading points of Catholic doctrine, may yield your marvelous intellect wholly to the guidance of His Spirit, and surrendering the jurisdiction which is dearer to you than life, fall into line under the one Shepherd appointed by Christ. I never think of you without recalling the hymn for the conversion of St. Paul.

> "Oh Wisdom ordering all things
> In order strong and sweet,
> What nobler spoil was ever
> Cast at the Victor's feet?"

I can conceive no greater conquest that the church could make in this generation than yourself, and I tremble before the thought of your awful responsibility for the souls which you shepherd, while I love you with a love that has in it almost an element of adoration. It seems presumptuous of me to believe that God would show me what He has not (?) shown you; yet isn't it always the note of faith that it comes into the un-

likeliest heart? — and I have needed so much from God of help and consolation.

Formally, I suppose what I do is to offer you my resignation, to take effect from June 1st, while holding myself in readiness to leave at a week's notice, if you desire me to sever from you at once. Dear Chief, my loved and honored leader, I wish I could find softer or more reverential words in which to say it. I know of no man made organization for which I would leave the Salvation Army. . . But I believe I go to Christ's own Church and to His living Presence on earth. How can I hesitate? I seek your own "Best." I do not believe that you will try to keep me.[1]

But if you do, or turn the weapons of my dearest earthly friendships, for your sister Eva, and for Eileen and for C. C.— against my soul I pray that I may die rather than turn back. I trust in the unfailing mercies of God to keep me, weakest soul that flies to Him, true to His call and His cross. . . . I have wondered, in homesick moments, whether you could not keep me as an employee. We do have Catholic employees. Or let me be a nurse in the Nursing Brigade for the slums, sending me to nurse Catholics only. Or let me study medicine, as Captain Isabel W. is to do and heal bodies among you. . . . But

[1] On the contrary, Mr. Bramwell said to me distinctly, "I would keep you by force, if I could." Author's note.

I do not suppose you can or will. And, indeed, I suppose I could not help trying to tell my old comrades what I feel and believe. And you, who do not yet believe, though I know you feel and see much as I do, could not sanction that.

Still, may I not keep your friendship, and write you sometimes, and see you when you come to this country, out of which it is not likely I shall go again? I have no plans. I cannot yet expect to know God's plans for me. . . . Surely, my act, as I wrench myself away from all that has made life for me for so long, with only love for you and love for our common Lord in my heart, is not one which need make the gulf the General sets when He says: "They go out from us because they are not of us." I go because I read the innermost meaning of all he loves and teaches. It will not hurt — it will help — souls for you to think and speak and write kindly of me and to pray for me.

I have told you all my human heart, with its clinging affection and its longing hopes. But for all the wealth of tenderness which I shower on you and the Consul and Eileen D. (may God deal with you as you deal with her!) and C. C. and R. and scores more than I dare dwell on in thought, I know no shade of doubt or fear, and no spiritual blessing I have ever known approached the rapture of access in prayer and of realization of God's spiritual presence everywhere, of His Real Presence in the barest or tawdriest little

church, which I experience, and which I covet for those multitudes in Army ranks who are so much worthier of God's wondrous gift of faith than

Yours lovingly, if no longer what you will call yours loyally, and still yours, soldier and servant of Christ,

SUSIE SWIFT, *Brigadier.*

That was nearly the end of the struggle. I sent the letter to Father Doyle to be mailed by him, and went home to my father's house, to breathe and pray for a week and to watch for a good opportunity of telling him. Meantime, a friend of years had written me from Dublin, telling me that she knew me too well not to detect a strange something in my letters. What was it? Was I going to marry out of the Army? She was making herself sick about it. I wrote her, pledging her to the strict secrecy she had already offered. I had forgotten that she held the rank in the Army which forbids its possessor to keep any secrets which it may be for the interests of headquarters to know. Within an hour after she received my letter, she had sent it on to the "Chief," and in another hour he had cabled me:

"Come London at once. Inform no one. Cunard Co. will furnish your passage."

For a week, Army money was poured out like water on cables between myself, the Chief, and my American leaders, who insisted that I should

NOT go to London and that they must be informed of the reason for my recall.

It was a nerve-racking week. But my nerves were *not* racked and my strange new calm was not disturbed. Frs. Doyle and Searle tried to persuade me not to go. But they could not realize the close, fond, family ties which exist between Army officials. All my life, I have been glad that those ties were not wrenched asunder by my hand, but by theirs, and that I gave them the last proof of affectionate confidence that I conscientiously could by going to give an account of the "faith that was in me."

But, at this last moment, a strange unwillingness to be baptized "in a hurry" seized upon me. How well I know, now, that last pitfall set for the catechumen! I could give no reason for my reluctance. It was simply a befogging of the spiritual atmosphere by the powers of darkness.

"You do need lots of prayers, these days," said Father Doyle, reflectively. "I must see what I can do about it."

This was something strangely new. Why did he not fall on his knees then and there, and let the flood of his eloquence influence me, as well as heaven?

I was to sail on Saturday.

"I can't and I won't be out of my office on Friday," I said, "if I am baptized, it will be on Thursday."

But I was baptized on Thursday and I did not enter the office on Friday, as it happened, being summoned to important officers' councils held in another part of the building. As a Catholic, I never did any work for the Salvation Army except to utter one prayer, in that same council.

Thursday morning came, and into my office walked Madelle W., daughter of Dr. W., formerly canon of St. George's Cathedral, Kingston. Madelle was one of my officers on whom I looked as on a dear younger sister. She often had theological puzzles to present, and she brought one today.

"Do you think baptism is absolutely necessary?" she asked, looking at me with big, dark eyes which demanded "truth in the inmost parts."

I paused to consider whether she were the direct emissary of God or the devil.

"Madelle," I said severely. "Surely you do not hold a commission in the Salvation Army without knowing its tenets. Our Army does *not* so hold."

"I asked what you thought," said Madelle.

"As a Salvation Army officer, I have no right to teach anything but Salvation Army doctrine," I parried.

"But you might believe something else. We may believe what we like," retorted the well-instructed Madelle.

"If you are settling your individual beliefs," I

said, "Go to your father. He is a doctor of divinity, and at present teaching theology. He is better qualified to instruct you than I am at this moment."

"I don't want to know what papa believes. I don't care. I want to know what you believe. You are my superior officer and I have a right to come to you."

"Madelle," I said, in a voice that startled her. "I will not tell you now. I sail for England on Saturday. When I come back I will tell you what you ask me if you still wish to know, and will tell you why I refuse to answer you to-day. Till then, I ask you not to tell anyone about this little talk. Both you and I have been baptized in the Episcopal Church so that it is a matter which need not press on either of us for immediate settlement."

Madelle left and Rose Lathrop entered, in an agony of emotion which I utterly failed to comprehend. She had been to see Father Doyle and had been told that it was doubtful if I would be baptized before sailing.

"You know how I live," she said, with her wonderful blue eyes full of tears. "The Scammel Street house" (her Cancer Home of that date) "is not a comfortable place. But still, if it is that you do not know where to go for the moment — to think — to breathe — half of all I have is yours, rather than that you should put off for one day or one hour what is the most wonderful, wonderful

thing in this world — the receiving of Our Lord.

"I don't so much trouble about your baptism, because very likely your Episcopal baptism was a very good kind (with a little twinkle of laughter) and Father Doyle has been trying to convince me that if the ship goes down, you will have the baptism of desire. But that doesn't comfort me, for I can't be content to have you go to Heaven, even, till you have known on earth what it is to receive our Lord in Holy Communion."

"Rose," I entreated, "Please go away. I can't have any more. I really can't. If my brain does not turn before I get out of this office, I *may* go up to be baptized, this afternoon."

"Come — come now, with me," pleaded the cooing voice, reinforced by the dancing blue eyes under the curling golden hair, hidden years ago under Mother Alphonsa's guimpe and veil.

"I — will — not," I answered. "I must have time to breathe and think. If I go, I will go alone."

"Very, well," said Rose, rising. "I will go down and set all my cancer patients to saying the Rosary."

At three o'clock I took one long, last look around the little office, with its big desk and tiny red velvet sofa. I lingered a moment in the great room outside, where half a dozen of my own girl officers were working, girls not one of whom I have spoken

to from that day to this. I paused in the outer room of all, where a seventeen year old stenographer was working. She had been baptized a few weeks before, telling me with fear and trembling, lest I should dismiss her. I stopped to look at little Mary, who had been brave, as I needed to be just now.

Then I went around the corner to my wee flat and locked myself into my own room therein. Time seemed to have vanished. "Oh God," I cried, "I can think nothing, remember nothing, feel nothing of all I have thought and felt in these weeks. I stand alone with Thee in the universe. God of Abraham, God of Adam in the Garden, help me to act as I should act if there were only Thee and me existing."

The fog lifted. Simple obedience to the first command of the New Law was my clear, plain duty. With consequences, I had nothing to do.

I walked out to the Elevated, and reached Father Doyle's office just as he was wrestling with the afternoon mail and the foreman printer. Years of experience had taught me how unpropitious was such a moment, and if anything had been wanting to eliminate every human element from my purpose, it would have been the finding myself so *de trop*. But I little knew the Paulist missionary.

"Well," he said, just lifting one eye from the mail.

"I've come," I answered. The foreman printer smiled.

"Does that mean — ?"

"I've come, and I want to come *in.*"

"In just five minutes, when I've looked at this mail. I have a godmother all ready for you. Miss McG——! Is there any particular saint whose name you would like to take?"

"Teresa, of course." It seemed as if he ought to know it. Her friendship and help had been as real a thing to me as that of Mrs. Lathrop and Mrs. Drummond, ever since one wintry London morning when she spoke to me through the gray London daylight, as I dressed to go to my commonplace office, and said, "I shall never leave you till you, too, are a child of the Church."

"I don't feel anything at all and I don't even care about it," I confided, on our way over, to the church from the office. "Ought I to feel anyway?"

"Just come on. You've done your part. I'll attend to the rest."

And there, fifteen minutes later, at that blessed font, the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, and which had visited me so blissfully during those trying months, settled down on my soul and the long, winding, dusty Road to Rome ended.

THE REV. JOHN D. WHITNEY,

Priest of the Society of Jesus.

I was brought up a Congregationalist; my mother was a very devout member of that Church. Fifty or sixty years ago in New England, the Congregationalists called themselves "Orthodox," and in the main, they were right; at least, they believed in the Trinity and in the Incarnation.

In the morning and again in the evening, of Sunday — commonly called the Sabbath — in company with my father and my mother, I used to attend the somewhat protracted services which were common in those days, and in the afternoon I went to the "Sabbath School." Here we were taught no doubt something of the catechism: What I chiefly remember is that we had to memorize a number of verses from the Scripture, from either the Old or the New Testament, and to answer questions like these: "What is the longest verse in the Bible? What is the shortest verse in the Bible? Who was the meekest man? Who was the strongest man?" etc.

I remember that even in those far-away days, while I was listening to the long sermon, I used to ask myself, "By what authority does that minister

up in that pulpit pretend to lay down the law for me?"

The Catholics in my native town were very few, being mostly servants and laborers, and as near as I remember, the common opinion was that "The Catholic Church is good enough for them." They held services perhaps once in two or three months in a hall which I used to pass daily on my way to school. I once asked my mother if I couldn't go in and see what mysterious things that room contained. She replied: "Oh! no, by no means," and so, I never saw the interior of "Harmony Hall" until I went there to say Mass as a Catholic priest some thirty of thirty-five years later.

As I grew older I read quite extensively the current literature of forty years ago — Mill, Huxley, Herbert Spencer, etc.— and naturally asked myself again the question: "By what authority do these ministers to whom I have been listening so many years, pretend to tell me what I am to believe and what I am to do?" Of course they had no authority: and as I confounded the Christianity of my old Congregationalist Church at home with Christianity in general, I felt myself utterly at a loss.

When I was in my twentieth year I fell in with Dr. A—— a young man a few years older than myself. We were fellow-officers on the School Ship Mercury and were accustomed to talk over the question of religion together. He was inclined

to argue more or less over some of the texts of the Greek Testament. He knew something about the Catholic Church although he was a Presbyterian by bringing up. He used to say: "The Protestant Churches are nothing. There is only one true Church, and it is either the Catholic Church or the Mormon Church." This was a curious and startling theory. The result of our intercourse was to convince me that the claims of the Catholic Church were at least worth consideration. That was a great step forward for me. I began to think and to look around. "By their fruits you shall know them."

At that time I was in a position to see the very different methods pursued by the Protestant chaplain, a very worthy man, and by the Catholic chaplain, an old and venerable Jesuit priest. The first did his work, such as it was, in a way with which no one could find fault; he held his services at the regular hour – the sermon was delivered, the hymns were sung, and the tracts were distributed — and all was over. The latter was most edifying in his complete devotion to the interests of those for whom he labored; he never spared himself at all; he was with the boys all day long, and in the evening until hammocks were piped down. The next morning at 5 o'clock he said Mass and gave Communion.

While in this receptive mood, by chance — say rather by Divine Providence — there came into my

hands, in the summer of 1870, a copy of "The Invitation Heeded," by the Rev. James Kent Stone.

Pius IX, after having called all the bishops of the Catholic Church to unite in the forthcoming council of the Vatican, had issued an invitation to all Protestants and other Non-Catholics, to consider and seriously examine whether they "followed the path marked out for them by Jesus Christ, our Lord, and which leads to eternal salvation," and "for their most fervent prayers to the God of Mercy . . . that He may lead them back to the bosom of Holy Mother Church, where their fathers found the wholesome pastures of life."

The Rev. James Kent Stone had heeded this invitation, and in his book he gave some "Reasons for a Return to Catholic Unity."

I say the book came into my hands by chance. Perhaps I had better tell the story. While we were in Newport attending the yacht races for the "America" cup in August, 1870, the Captain of the Mercury, as a great treat, invited a newly-wedded Catholic couple who were there on their bridal tour, to return with us to New York after the races were over. The day of departure came. We weighed anchor, set sail and started for home. While we were drifting lazily up Long Island Sound I was surprised while below, to hear the boatswain's mate call away the third cutter. It was a most unusual thing to lower a boat under these

conditions, and I ran up on deck to see what it all meant. I found that the bride had dropped a book into the water and the Executive Officer, who was on deck at the time, had ordered the boat lowered to rescue it. As soon as we Officers learned the cause of the commotion, we smiled at the Executive Officer's gallantry and turned away. The next day when we arrived in New York, the lady, Mrs. S——, left the book on the wardroom table. I was curious to see what had been the object of this remarkable rescue. I took up the book and found it was the "Invitation Heeded." I read it over and over again with ever increasing pleasure and satisfaction. I had found the source and seat of authority.

Much to the surprise of Father D——, I approached him one day with the book in my hand and said: "Father, if this book be true, I feel that I ought to become a Catholic." He answered very prudently: "Well, it's a serious question. You must pray over it, and I will send you more books to read."

And so the months passed. The Father sent me a number of books which he thought suitable, among others Father Hecker's "Questions of the Soul," and "Aspirations of Nature," a book by Joshua Huntington, who himself had been a Congregationalist, Burnett's "Path which led a Lawyer into the Catholic Church," etc., etc. I read these books, talked with my friend Dr. A—— and prayed for

light and strength. I felt convinced that I ought to become a Catholic and I intended to become one some day in the indeterminate distant future, but it was not until the first of November that I determined that the day had arrived. I called in New York to see Father D——, and talked over matters with him, and owing to something which he said, I came to the conclusion that now was the time, and I agreed to accompany him the next morning to the Church of the Paulist Fathers, the old one on Fifty-ninth street, so that Dr. Stone, who was residing there, might be my godfather.

And so on the second of November, All Souls' Day, 1870, I was baptized conditionally by Father D——, and received into the Catholic Church. When I arrived at the Church they were singing the Requiem Mass appointed for the day; the catafalque was there and the candles, all of which were strange and unintelligible to me; but I had found the Seat of Authority, the Catholic Church, and I was prepared to accept whatever She proposed to me. I had been present several times when Father D—— said Low Mass, but I had never attended High Mass of any kind before, except once, when some two years before, I had gone to hear the music in the Church of the Immaculate Conception in Boston.

Many years have passed since that November day, years of study and labor. I have come to know the Catholic Church, her beauty and doc-

trines, better and better. I have never ceased to thank God for that great grace which led me to know her mission and her functions in the economy of the Redemption, to heed the invitation of her Supreme Pastor, and enter into her fold.

THE REV. STEPHEN WARREN WILSON,

Priest of the Diocese of Cleveland.

One would think that, after five years in the Catholic Church, I could see my conversion in the right perspective. But, when I look at the path that led me thither, I find it difficult to trace its turns and windings. Perhaps this is due to the fact that I have not been trying to recall it, but rather wondering why I did not become a Catholic sooner. Again, it is not easy to avoid the mistake of reading into my experience the clearer light that is mine now and of forgetting that I wandered in an obscure night of doubt wearily seeking for the light. I am sure of this, that I was led out of that night into the home of truth by the gift of faith, and that I have never had one moment's regret or misgiving for the step. I did not come into the Church until I was sure that it was my duty to God, to myself and to those who trusted me, many of whom have followed me into the Church.

I was raised by devout parents in an old-fashioned Episcopalian parish. When, by their advice, I went to Nashotah to study for the ministry, I knew very little that is true about the Catholic Church, and, naturally, I accepted the current misconceptions of her history and teachings. I fancied I belonged to

the true Church of God and not to a man-made sect, to the venerable Anglican Communion, which had merely washed her face at the time of the Reformation, when she repudiated the Pope and all Roman corruptions, keeping, however, her ancient Apostolic ministry and the two great Sacraments. With these and her "Incomparable Liturgy" she was superior to the Protestant sects, and by her fearless appeal to the pure faith and practice of the primitive church, she stood as a "double witness" against Roman corruptions and additions to the "Faith once delivered to the saints" and Protestant denials thereof. This seemed to me to be far more reasonable than the Protestant position, which scorns tradition, saying that God's Church never was right, and subjects the Bible to the mercy of private interpretation. That could not be God's plan for preserving His revelation, for it broke down completely as soon as it was put into practice and produced a multitude of warring sects, each of which was sure that it alone had the pure faith. No; our Lord commanded us to hear the Church. But surely He did not mean the Roman Church, for that Church was corrupt, as we all knew. What was more reasonable than to hearken, as we did, to the interpretation of the Bible given us by the age of martyrs and confessors, when there was no discordant note of division? This left us in possession of the field.

At Nashotah I became more adept in this position

and I also came under the influence of the Anglo-Catholic Movement, which had its headquarters at that seminary. At first I looked upon that movement as an attempt to "Romanize the Church" and I viewed it with distrust and alarm; however, I listened with an open mind, as I had expected to learn something at the seminary, and I soon found that it squared with the principle of the appeal to the primitive church. That church had something besides the three orders of the ministry, who wore distinctive vestments and read prayers out of a book. It believed in the Sacrifice of the Mass, the Invocation of the Saints, Purgatory and Confession; therefore I must believe in them also. But why had the Church of England left them out? It was Puritan fanaticism that had deprived the Church of these treasures. It had cost something to have a "pure branch of the true church." Reforms always go to extremes and this "face washing" had been rather severe. But it was time now to "rise to our Catholic heritage"; time for Zion to "Awake and put on her beautiful garments"; time to "Lengthen her cords and strengthen her stakes"; for the others would simply have to come in when they saw her in her true colors; she would prove a rallying-point for the reunion of divided Christendom. There were divisions, it is true, in the seminary itself; professors were not agreed and students argued fiercely. But, as the principle was accepted, the details would work out in harmony.

Father Gardner took charge of the seminary and it became "Catholic" at once. We were very enthusiastic, especially when Bishop Grafton came to visit us. There were so many good and learned men on our side that we had no doubt of its ultimate victory over the inertia of conservatism. Our cause was bound to win by force of its reasonableness and the splendid results it had already achieved in toning up the spiritual life of frozen Anglicanism. The people would soon give up their timidity and suspicion when they understood the truth and the old fogies would then get into line.

But when I went out to work in the ministry, I found that the laity had some very definite ideas of their own about their "Catholic heritage." They had heard all about it and they were not noticeably anxious to rise to it. They could detect a "Romanist in disguise" by an unfailing instinct. Like the scent of the fox to the hound was the sight of any unaccustomed ritual to these heresy hunters. They had also some very effective arguments which were not appreciated at the seminary — they could isolate the rector and cut off his supplies! I lighted two candles on the Altar — I might as well have advocated flagellation! It is vain for some to say that they object to ceremonies and decent ritual ornaments because they do not approve of "millinery in the services." They object because they know that such ritual manifests a belief in Catholic doctrines which they abhor. The issue is clearly de-

fined. I soon discovered that, if I was to succeed in the ministry, I must trim a safe course. The people would have none of this "Catholic ritual," and they had the last word, no matter what the opinion of the Bishop happened to be. Did I fail for lack of tact and patience? I looked around at others who had left the seminary with the same convictions and hopes that I cherished, and I could not discover one who had kept up the fight. They had settled down to walking sedately in the old paths — "come to their senses," as their Bishops and parishioners expressed it. They were waiting for the Anglican Communion to "wash her face" again. Their "advanced ideas" were relegated to the junk-heap of youthful fancies, such as college fraternities. Some kept up a great deal of Catholic talk in private, but in public they were careful not to offend. They were "Fathers" in select circles, but elsewhere, plain "mister," unless they assumed the title of "Doctor" to escape the dilemma. They showed less zeal for orthodoxy than for "solid reputation" as "safe men." Such scraps of Catholic doctrine as they still retained they held as a fugitive speculation — pretty much as they had once advocated clerical celibacy —they were willing to be shown. There were a few parishes, perhaps a dozen in the whole country, that enjoyed a "full Catholic ceremonial" and corresponding teaching, but they were surrounded by a dense wall of Protestantism and they had about as much influence upon

their environment as a fly embedded in a block of cement. As for the church itself, the Oxford Movement had spent its force without accomplishing more than the introduction of some inoffensive ritual and an empty terminology, while the spiritual life of the laity and nearly all of the ministers had not risen above its old subjective pietism, of Lutheran extraction. I had supposed that I was ordained and sent out to do the work of a Priest, or at least to do something toward making that work possible for a future generation; but I found that I must keep the secret of my priesthood locked within my breast — only ministers were wanted.

By this time I had begun to suspect that there was something wrong with our theory of authority, for plainly we had nothing but the theory. What good can come of an appeal to the primitive church, which is not here to speak for itself? Hitherto I had contented myself with the knowledge that it believed and practiced all that the Catholic revival desired. But how did that church get the faith and how was it preserved? Surely not by private opinion appealing to a silent past; for then it would have been as divided as we are now. If that church is fairly interpreted by the Episcopal Church; it must have been a wonderful affair. A recent Episcopalian writer boasts that "From the dawn of the Reformation in England until to-day our strength has been that we have not settled doctrinal differences. By our genius for comprehensiveness we have united

irreconcilables and gloried in the simultaneous possession of doctrinal positions radically incompatible." But the strength and glory of the early church was in the unity of the faith; heresies were sharply repressed. I feared that I had read the history of that period to little purpose if I had not discovered the principle by which the faith was preserved. I began to see too that it is inconsistent to appeal to the early church for Bishops and to tell the Presbyterian, who rejects prelacy as a wholesale corruption of an earlier regime, that the Church of God could not become corrupt. Our Lord promised that He would be with it to the end of time, that "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it." But were we any better when we rejected the Papacy as a like wholesale corruption in the fifth century? If the church was infallible in the third century, it was infallible in the fifth, and is so now. Of what use was a limited, suspended infallibility which broke down when it was most needed? Again, it is just as good Protestantism to subject the early Church to private interpretation as it is to let each one pick and choose his doctrine from the Bible. It increases the confusion by geometrical progression. Anyone knows what a Baptist or a Methodist is, but who knows what an Episcopalian is? Now there is nothing Catholic in this; it is really a different religion. One of my neighbors remarked the other day, after reading a few pages of a book explaining Catholic doctrine,

"Why, this starts out like you Catholics thought you were right." Yes, we know that God is right and that He has always kept His Church right. But no one to whom I went in my trouble, and I consulted many, ever told me anything about the virtue of faith or of an infallible teacher from whom I could learn the truth. One, a seminary professor, assured me that there is not and never had been such a church in the world. Well, I knew a very large and powerful Church that claimed to possess such divine authority. My early prejudices against the Catholic Church had turned to respect and even admiration after I had closely observed her work in several states. Well-informed and fair-minded ministers did not hesitate to say, in private, that the Catholic Church is a grand institution; that it is doing a noble work; in fact, it is too bad we are separated from it. I resolved to read again the history and to test the grounds of that unfortunate separation, and not with the aid of Anglican books this time. I knew what they said and I distrusted their value as guides for one seeking the truth. They could not agree among themselves as to the meaning and value of the facts of their own history three hundred and fifty years ago; could they do any better with the history of the primitive church? They were in continual dispute among themselves as to what family of Christians they belonged — whether the Reformation in England was a Catholic or Protestant settlement. I noticed a strong tendency

among recent and better informed Anglican writers, like Maitland and Gairdner, to treat the popular and prevailing "history" of the English Reformation as pure fable, and such I found it to be when I consulted writers who had no theory to uphold. If anyone would learn the Protestant beginning of the Establishment, he has only to heed the advice of the Prophet; "Look to the rock whence ye are hewn." Let him compare the Prayer Book with the Catholic ritual which it supplanted and he will see that the changes are such as no Catholic would make. The differences between the Anglican liturgy and its continental models, which came largely from the same hands, are merely differences of degree and not of kind. This is demonstrated by Professor Jacobs, of the Lutheran seminary in Philadelphia, in his scholarly book, "The Lutheran Movement in the Church of England." I know now that the "fearless appeal" to antiquity was an afterthought of the Reformers. Their first appeal was to the "Bible only" as the Prayer Book and Articles of Religion show. Had they rested their case there, it would have been safer and more consistent; for the study of antiquity has driven to the Catholic Church a steady stream of converts representing the best scholarship of the English Church. They learned that the Fathers give no comfort to an Anglican, high or low. The Fathers know no more of Anglicanism than the Scriptures know of Protestantism. The writers whom I had studied tried

to prove from isolated instances that the early Church had no Popes — just as they try to show that England never was properly papal. A writer who would make such claims now would be considered a back number, even among Anglicans, who seem to be about the last to learn the history of the Christian Religion. Protestant writers have told them all along that the Catholic Church alone has any support from a fair and adequate view of antiquity. I cannot give here more than the results of my investigations. I do not wish to plunge again into that "troubled sea of noises and hoarse disputes." I neglected no source from which I could expect any help in the search for the truth. I found the Catholic Church to be just what she will show herself to be to anyone who will open his eyes and look at her and rid his mind of nursery-tales and misunderstandings of her doctrines and practices — "The Church of the Living God, the Pillar and Ground of the Truth." She may truthfully say with one of her greatest popes, "I have loved righteousness and hated iniquity." I found that I had been hugging a delusion. I had thought I was a Catholic, but my church was not the Episcopal Church; it had no objective existence; it was a creature of fancy, the reflection of my private opinion. The gift of Faith taught me all this. Without that "Gift of God" I would have been as those who "Feel the attractions of truth, but feel none of its obligations."

THE REV. CLARENCE E. WOODMAN, A.M., PH.D.,

Priest of the Congregation of St. Paul the Apostle.

The story of my conversion is a very simple one. It is this:—

1. I believed, in the words of the Nicene Creed, that our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ "came down from heaven for us men and for our salvation."

2. I believed that He established a Church, to carry on this work of man's salvation to the end of time.

3. I believed that He appointed the Apostles to govern that Church; and that he promised to be with them, and their successors, "always, even to the consummation of the world."

4. I believed that He chose out one of these Apostles, to be the chief among his brethren: to be His Vice-gerent on earth: to be His Church's visible head: to "feed" (as He Himself says), "His Lambs and His sheep."

5. I believed that these lambs and sheep cannot belong to the fold of Christ unless they are of that flock which is fed by Christ's earthly vicar.

6. I believed that this earthly vicar is, and al-

ways has been, the successor of St. Peter, our holy father the Pope.

7. Hence to be in communion with Jesus Christ, it is necessary to be in communion with the See of Rome.

8. Hence I became a Roman Catholic.

THE REV. HENRY H. WYMAN,

Priest of the Congregation of St. Paul the Apostle.

You ask me to write the story of my conversion, but, in truth, I think it is hardly worth telling. If there is anything peculiar about it it is that what made me a Catholic was what first made me a Congregationalist. My joining the Catholic Church was but the completion of that act. This happened when I was nineteen years old. I was born and brought up in a New England village, my parents being of exemplary lives; but my father never joined a church — and my mother did so only when I was about eleven years old. I saw her baptized in the Orthodox church, and it was a great event to me, being the earliest of my strong religious impressions. Of course I considered myself as too young to become a Christian, but I hoped God would spare me until I was old enough to become one. There is no use for children in Calvinism. At the age of nineteen I professed religion and was baptized. The Bible was the cause of it. I read it from my earliest childhood, and after the ripening of my faculties I followed the rational process of discovering the truth. Christianity I proved historically and then Scripturally, not the least argument, however, being the need I found of it to keep the natural law

of God. *The Pilgrim's Progress* had a powerful influence on me, which has ever remained. It is a book full of truth, of graphic narrative, proving the need of repentance for sin.

I cannot remember that when I stood before the church committee for examination, to be admitted to membership, I had a single heresy. I believed what Christ revealed, and I repented of my sins. This belief and repentance I affirmed and explained to the committee with the deepest sincerity, keeping nothing back. I was accepted and deemed worthy of baptism and membership, and was accordingly baptized. This was a truly marvellous awakening in my life; the powerful graces then received, and the emotions aroused within me, were the chief cause of my becoming a Catholic afterwards.

I had nothing in my belief of Congregationalism in particular, but only of Christianity in general, yet Orthodox, as we say of it in New England to distinguish it from Unitarianism: holding the Trinity, the Incarnation, and Redemption as taught in Scripture. On the hot points of human depravity, predestination, and justification by faith alone, the church committee did not examine me much. I was sound and right on them, in the Catholic sense. As to eternal punishment, I believed it as firmly as Bunyan, and the necessity of escaping from it by faith and works. No revival meeting had anything to do with my profession; the human side of the work was all my own. I felt perfectly satisfied, and was con-

vinced I had the true Christian religion. And I am sure I did not hold explicitly to any error. My whole frame of mind was shaped by Scripture. I remember that I believed firmly in baptismal regeneration, because the Lord said he that believeth and *is baptized* shall be saved. I did not know enough of the Catholic Church to form any belief about it.

When, then, did my mind begin to stir on that question? In my last year at college, to which I went shortly after "becoming a Christian." Somewhere about Christmas time a college mate, a member of the Baptist sect, called me aside and said: "I very much fear that I am not right in my religion, and that the Catholic Church is true."

I replied: "The matter is well worth investigating." It flashed upon me then that perhaps my friend's doubts were well founded. I began to study the big question that very evening. The next morning I went to the miserable little Catholic bookstore of the town, kept by a lame man, and bought a Catholic prayer-book, *Key of Heaven,* also *The Mission-Book* of St. Liguori, Challoner's *Catholic Christian Instructed,* and the Little Catechism. This last was the first Catholic book I ever read. Challoner I read through and found of immense help. *The Mission-Book* also helped me greatly; I learned from it that the Catholic religion is primarily interior. I expected to find it mainly external. I found that for every ceremony or

practice sanctioned by the Church there was a reason that was interior and intrinsic, and that the interior was the primary object of the exterior. Right after this I read the Pope and Maguire discussion, and found it useful. It was lent to me by a young Catholic friend at college, since then become a man of much distinction.

Another impulse, and at about the same time, came from the history class. Our professor, a learned and distinguished man, was always honest with us. In the course of my private study I found out that in the fifth century the pope was universally recognized in Christendom as the successor of St. Peter; this was the teaching, too, of our professor. Then I asked myself, Can I suppose an error on such a fundamental point was believed by all Christians universally? That cannot be. All Christendom cannot err. They could not so err even humanly speaking; four hundred years after Christ men had as good means of knowing what His Apostles taught as we have of knowing what the first Reformers taught. They were within hand's reach of the primitive Christians and still in the heroic age of the religion of Christ.

What helped me all through that winter of study, argument and prayer (for I prayed to God for light continually), was my Bible training. I had not been mistaught by the Scriptures. I culled no errors from the Bible, and it gave me no trouble in my investigations. I never was an infidel. Nor

had I much difficulty on the score of human respect. My parents were ever kind. For the rest, my prospects in life were entirely undefined. I knew I had to earn my own living, and I have always done so. My main thought in all religious matters was the one that took hold of me when I read Bunyan and joined the Orthodox church. I was determined to save my soul.

Yet I had a struggle; my greatest difficulty was Papal Infallibility. My early surroundings had kept the Papal question so entirely out of my way that the bearings of Scripture on it had not arrested my attention. It was just after the Vatican Council and the air was full of discussion. Although the Catholic doctrine of Infallibility is as plainly in the New Testament as the Trinity is, yet I spent many hard hours of debate with myself and others over it.

Just here it was that I came in contact for the first time with Catholics. I had played sometimes with a little Irish boy at school, and had known a few Irish laborers in our town, and never had thought what their religion might be. Now I began to look around for Catholics, and found two of them, students at the college. One of them helped me somewhat, explaining the doctrine of the Sacraments so intelligently that I never needed any further instruction to enable me to believe in them. Meanwhile the struggle about infallibility went on. I finally called on the bishop of the diocese

(I remember it was on a Saturday), and asked plumply: "Can one become a Catholic, and not believe in infallibility?" "No," he answered. "Was the Vatican Council free?" I asked, knowing that the bishop had attended it. "Yes, it was," he answered; and yes he answered again when I questioned him as to whether that subject had been freely and sufficiently discussed. This had a good effect on me.

Then I carefully read a book against infallibility, Quirinus I think it was called — a book something like the famous Janus. I saw that the book was unfair and fallacious from beginning to end. I next visited a priest of the city to whom the bishop had referred me. During a course of several interviews we settled down to the study of the typical case of Pope Honorius, fully and elaborately going through the whole evidence, and at the end I was completely convinced of the doctrine of infallibility. An article in The *Catholic World*, by Rev. Augustine F. Hewit, on the apostasy of Dr. Dollinger, helped me very much. Rev. J. Kent Stone's "Invitation Heeded" fell into my hands, and by the time I finished reading it I was as much a Catholic as I am to-day.

I was received into the Church in rather a public manner, the evening before I graduated, reciting the creed of Pius IV with as little misgiving as the Lord's Prayer, and I have been in the same state of mind ever since. There had been no agonies of

mind in my progress to the full truth, but much rational questioning. Yet there is one book, "The Aspirations of Nature," by Rev. I. T. Hecker, which, if I had had it, would have greatly smoothed my way. I had more than enough of Scripture proof; this book would have put Catholicity on a rational basis to start with. I was really a Catholic all my life and did not know it, being anchored in the Scriptures all through.

It is always a curious question how much nature and grace have relatively to do with a conversion. In my case I am inclined to think that a special grace was given me, because I remember, before going to college, attending a lecture on the Church by an intelligent priest, which simply had no manner of effect whatever in inducing me to examine Catholic claims.

Not to have become a Catholic when I did would have been apostasy from my vows of baptism as a Congregationalist, and from the principles I learned in Bunyan; a particularly wilful apostasy from my allegiance to Holy Scriptures, and a most grievous sin. If I had not then become a Catholic, I am persuaded I should thereby have done something to shut the door of heaven against me for ever.

My great difficulties were really moral ones. In the course of my search I soon perceived that Catholicity is a hard religion, and I was distressed with the dread that I should not have the courage to live up to my conscience. How can I persevere, I

thought, in that high moral life which this faith demands? I conquered this stumbling block (I say it in no boastful spirit), as St. Augustine did, by prayer.

I found my first confession very hard and every confession since has been difficult to me, but always beneficial. Whose experience has not been similar, from St. Augustine, yes, from Magdalen, to this day? The strictness of the Catholic religion was a dominant impression in my mind; I was convinced that I had got as hard a religion in my day as Anthony of the Desert had in his. I also found a difficulty in accepting fellowship in a society ruled by Irish bishops and priests, as St. Augustine did in St. Ambrose and the bishops and priests of his day, and a fair share of the same consolations. I have got along famously, but, being a Yankee, in a rather dry way.

X. Y. Z.

NEW YORK CITY, N. Y.

I.

The first thing that drew me to the Catholic Church was its wonderful spirit of prayer. Chance (shall I call it so?), took me to a Catholic Church, the first I had ever entered save once; and that was in very early childhood. Now I paused on the threshold, enthralled by the sight of the quiet kneeling figures in all parts of the building, absorbed in private devotion. I had been brought up in the highest tenets of Anglicanism, and I understood the meaning of what I saw. This faith, embodied in its worshippers, was objective and subjective. Its devotion was called forth by the adorable Presence on the Altar. I went home, but I came again, and in the course of time I announced my desire to study the how and why of the existence of the Catholic Church, meeting with the objections and opposition that sincere and well meaning Anglicans must ever oppose to such a course. I read books on both sides of the controversy, and talked with both Catholic priests and Anglican clergy, without arriving at any definite conclusions.

From my schooldays, which were then only lately past, my favourite studies had been history and

mental philosophy.— How eagerly I seized on the vista that opened before me in this hitherto unknown course of reading. Here was history of a marvellous continuity, and philosophy that satisfied both the heart and the head. Moëhler's "Symbolism," and the "Invitation Heeded," of the great Passionist Monk, Father Fidelis, were, I think, in those early days, my most helpful books. Perhaps my mental process went ahead of the grace needed to complete it; be that as it may, in a year from the time I started on my quest, I became a member of the Catholic Church.

After remaining for five years in its communion, I left it to become an Anglican again. Even at that time, a period of great mental agony, I announced that my change was not made because of anything lacking in the Roman Catholic Church. I had been led to think I had treated the Anglican unfairly, and that she it was who had the claim to my allegiance. With this belief, and in this state, I remained for several years, never, thank God, losing my faith in revealed religion; and held to the Catholic Church, though I did not know it then, by a slender thread, which had never been severed; and that was my belief in the Real Presence. It drew and compelled me toward my true Mother. Never did I see or feel it in the so-called Ritualistic Churches that I attended in New York, Philadelphia, and other cities.— It is not too much to say that during those years a "Low" service, with

Matins and the beautiful English psalms, appealed to me more than a "High Celebration," which I was physically and mentally unable to look on as other than an empty formalism.

I was in this state of mind when I made the acquaintance of Mr. ——, who was then president of the Nineteenth Century Club, a clever, brilliant and interesting man, with whom I became friends, Mr. —— was an Agnostic, a follower of the philosophy of Auguste Comte, and a close friend of Robert G. Ingersoll. Our talk drifted to religion, and one day he brought me a pamphlet, written by himself, and containing, so he said, his "belief." The first pages were devoted to trying to prove that God was a wanderer in "Erehwon" (Nowhere)— the greatest effort of man's intellect had failed to find Him. The most powerful telescope ever invented had been unable to pierce far enough into space to find that Heaven He was supposed to inhabit. I turned the pages, and was met by the proposition of another astronomical fact — and a true one this time. Beyond the farthest planet there were worlds upon worlds, gigantic spaces in the Universe to which finite man had never penetrated; distances which almost transcended belief. I finished the pamphlet, and gave it back to Mr. ——.

"Well," he said, "what do you think of it?"

"It isn't logical," I answered. "You tell us on one page that God is a wanderer in "Erehwon,"

and that the telescope can't find Him — in the next breath you tell us there are worlds beyond worlds never yet reached by the most powerful telescope; but which great astronomers know to exist; how do *you* know but that your unfound Heaven is there?"

"Ah!" he said, with a smile, "I see you are a good reasoner."

It was this conversation that set me thinking — I longed to present the truths of Christianity to this man; but how? I saw at once that my "Three Branch" theory would appear to him as shifting sand. It would be (to him) only one of a multitude of Protestant sects; and then my thoughts turned to that mighty Catholic and Roman Church that I knew so well from my five years spent in its fold; and something told me how strong my position would have been could I have spoken to him with the divine authority of the Church.

"The still, small voice" had made itself heard within me, never to be silenced again; some later experiences deepened my feeling, until the time came when I faced the issue squarely, and asked myself whether — even though in good faith — I had not made a mistake. Now after a period of nearly ten years of being a Catholic in the fullest sense of the word, I am persuaded from observation and my own experience, that no sincere and earnest soul that has once taken the step of entering the Church ever turns back save for one of two reasons.

The first and prime cause is that the Catholic

position in its entity is not properly understood; there is either a lack of faith to accept it, or else the second cause is the point at issue; and the convert has entered the fold without being properly instructed, though he or she has given the impression of understanding and accepting all that is necessary, else, of course, reception would have been delayed. The first cause named was my own reason for retrogression. I failed to grasp the divine authority of the Church, its absolute oneness under a Visible Head. I had also been disturbed by constant reiterations of how superior numbers of Protestants, and even Agnostics, were, in respect to their personal character and private life, to a corresponding number of Catholics. This is a point so often brought up that it should be viewed in its proper light. To take a good Protestant and a bad Catholic, and compare them, is no argument. But take the highest type of a Catholic, place him alongside the highest type of a non-Catholic (of whatever creed), and I think the history of all ages will tell which is the higher. Has the Protestant or non-Christian world ever known a great soul to surpass a St. Francis Xavier, a St. Vincent de Paul, a Fénélon, or the Great Poverello of Assisi?

The still, small voice was speaking very loudly now. It may be asked, did I have troubles of doctrine? Yes, and no. In that final conflict the battle waged around one point only, the supremacy of the sovereign pontiff, as head of the One Universal

Church. I saw clearly and with unerring vision, that it was the fundamental point at issue. Prove it and all else followed as a logical sequence. Of what use splitting hairs about communion in one kind, or indulgences, or devotion to the Blessed Mother of God — these were questions of faith or of discipline that had been settled by the Church. The papacy was a fact. Even the infallibility never caused me any mental problems, for I saw that if the grant to St. Peter and his successors was true, then the infallibility was a natural correlation. Christian Rome had been built on the ruins of pagan Rome — why then should not the Pope be the legitimate successor of the Pontifex Maximus of heathen Rome?

II.

I had read quite deeply and extensively all the ground that covers the arguments for and against the supremacy, and still remained unconvinced, when I met with some reasoning that settled my doubts once and forever. The author of the pamphlet that fell into my hands argued that in order to correctly judge the events in any age of the world, we must, as far as possible, place ourselves in spirit in that age and study its people, language and peculiarities. No more striking instance of this existed than the controversy about the text, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church," etc., Matt. xvi. 18, 19.

What, then, were the facts in this case? The best and latest historians, both Protestant and Catholic, agree that the language our Lord used for ordinary speech was the Syro-Chaldaic, wherein the words "Peter" and "rock" are one and the same —"Kipha." Moreover, Peter's name was originally Simon. He was known as Simon, the Son of Jona. On this occasion it is Christ Himself who confers upon Peter a *new* name, making it the more direct and impressive by first addressing him by his name of Simon. "Blessed art thou, Simon, Bar-Jona. . . . And I say unto thee that thou art Peter (Kipha) and upon this rock (Kipha) I will build my Church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.

"And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth it shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven." Could anything be more plain; and where had the prophecy been fulfilled if not in the Catholic (Roman) Church?

My last intellectual doubts vanished, but by some curious process, my will was not yet in accord with my reason. I was pursued by the old *ignis fatuis,* duty. Was it really my duty to return to this ancient Church that now loomed so large before me?

I was in this frame of mind when one day I went to call at a Catholic Convent, the Mother Superior of which had attracted me greatly. She was one of

those rare souls, of fine intellect and great piety, so often to be met with behind convent walls. My inward difficulty was known to her, although never before referred to by either of us. On this occasion I broached the subject.

"I wish I knew what to do," I said. "I believe in the Catholic religion, but I do not know what my duty is."—

"If your faith is Catholic," she answered, "your duty is Catholic."

Like a fog lifting at sea, the cloud rolled away from my heart and brain. . . . There it was, marvellously simple, like all great truths. "If your *faith* is Catholic, your *duty* is Catholic." Why had I not seen it before? Why had I wandered for years in such a maze of contradictions? My belief? Was it not Catholic in its entirety, and had it not, perhaps, always been so? Only a mistaken idea of duty had turned me aside from that broad road, drenched with the blood of martyrs, brooded over by the Holy Spirit of God, which led straight to the Eternal City, "set on a hill."

I arose and girded up my loins; and like Christian I set out joyfully to gain entrance to my fair City. A few days later, I sought the good Jesuit priest who had watched over me, from afar, for months, with fatherly solicitude; and kneeling in the Tribune, all the past was confessed and forgiven. Surely mine would be some severe penance; but no — I was told to go in the Church and recite the

Miserere, and ten minutes later, there I knelt in the fast darkening church, with the red light of the sanctuary lamp directing heart and soul to the fountain of all Mercy. And then, as I began that sublime cry of the psalmist, I understood.

"Have Mercy on me, O God: according to Thy great Mercy, and according to the multitude of Thy tender Mercies: blot out mine iniquity. . . . For behold, Thou hast loved truth: the uncertain and hidden things of Thy wisdom Thou hast made manifest to me."

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CURTIS, GEORGINA PELL

AUTHOR

Some Roads to Rome in America

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